COMPOSURE

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DESIGN STATEMENT

Composure has an aesthetic direction that crosses paths between psychedelic and minimalism. Our focus is heavily driven through vaporwave styles with nods to media such as: Chainsaw-man, The Matrix and Inception, alongside stylized horror that is seen through the works of horror writer and artist, Junji Ito.

This book contains themes and stylized imagery of psychological horror and body horror, and may not be suitable for all audiences. Reader discretion is advised.

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INTRODUCTION

High Concept

Composure is a tabletop role-playing game about a human city within the endless dream of an ancient eldritch being. The shifting city of Composure stands in solitude amidst the endless void of the Dreamscape, serving to keep its host deep in eternal slumber lest it stir and consume the waking world.

But Composure, despite its name, is not a place of peace. Power-hungry political factions grapple for dominance, researchers and cultists race to discover incomprehensible knowledge, and the dreamscape's twisted inhabitants lurk threateningly in the shadowy outskirts. As you, the newest arrivals, awaken strange powers within yourselves, the fate of Composure rests in your hands.

Note To Game Master

Hello, dear Game Master! If you're reading this, you're about to step your players into the mysterious city of Composure. Forbidden knowledge, political tension, deep personal journeys, horrifying monsters and more await you and your players within the city limits, and within the pages of this guidebook. While we've set up plenty of building blocks for you, we want you to know that this is your game, and you can choose to use, ignore, or build on anything you like in here. Add your own stuff! The Dreamscape is infinitely malleable, so get creative!

Most importantly, Composure is a horror setting at its core, so make sure your players are along for the ride. In your first session, it's always a good idea to outline themes and concepts you'll be delving into, and give your players the opportunity to veto these if necessary. Horror as a genre can be incredibly immersive, but the players should still be comfortable within the space. Additionally, having a shorthand/code for players to signal their discomfort mid-game (like a hand sign or a card) is a very simple way to ensure that everyone's still enjoying the immersion.

Player Introduction

Awake, Deep in Slumber.

GM Notes

We recommend reading this page to your players and keeping the rest of the history to yourself, to give them a loose idea of the world without compromising the intrigue

At some point, during the early stages of humanity, an unknown entity fell from space. It landed with force enough to ripple the ground below it, creating a dense crater, where it still lies to this day. The landscape around it is barren, all the plant life that lived there before its arrival long since decomposed. All who venture near it feel it tugging on their mind, fixing to rip the very thoughts from their brain. While some curious conspiracists have pressed on beyond its outer radius, they were never seen again, and the rest of humanity is generally fine with giving it a wide berth. Drones have been sent in to record it, returning with nothing but blank feeds. Only three things have been learned about the anomaly: It's alive, it's hungry, and should it awaken, it would spell disaster for the entire world.

Since its arrival, strange phenomena have occurred across the globe. Many people have woken up after an otherwise normal night of sleep, claiming to have lived full lifetimes within a vast city of strange lights and shifting architecture. They tell fantastical stories of humans conjuring magic and bleeding white dust. While these stories are hard to believe on the surface, these people have clearly changed from who they were on the previous day. Some wake up mad, frothing at the mouth and raving in languages that don't exist and can't be translated. Most hauntingly, some wake up empty. All their worldly knowledge - their name, the languages they speak, the memories of the people they once knew - wiped permanently clean, leaving only a physical shell of the person they once were, good as dead.

And the time does come for everyone, eventually. The anomaly just likes to wait until its food is ripe, it seems. It's just a part of life now, that when a person comes of age somewhere between 25 and 35, a shadowy archway begins manifesting in their dreams. That every night, it appears to them, and they hear their name called in lilting voices, beckoning them across the threshold. Some who have returned to the waking world try desperately to make their way back, speaking of a heavenly place where their deepest desires can be fulfilled forever. But those who venture in and manage to awaken are destined never to return, and never dream of the archway again. Some describe an urban hellscape, where the darkest aspects of human nature bubble to the surface, manifesting in grisly mutations and twisted magic. Some yet say the city holds the secrets that humanity is yet to understand, answers to questions of purpose and meaning that have so deftly eluded philosophers since man evolved the capacity to think.

No matter your reasoning, no matter what you've heard, you just viscerally know that whatever you need lies beyond that shadowy arch. And so it's time, dear Dreamers, to take your first steps into the unknown.

World Introduction

Before Time and Beyond Space.

The Dreamscape is an alternate dimension to the universe as we know it, with its own definitions of time and space. The city of Composure is a human construct, so it obeys the perceived laws of physics to a degree. However, the reality-bending influence of the Dreamscape and its host can be felt even in the innermost areas of the city. On the outskirts, the abyss of maddening Dark twists the architecture and nature, making it jagged, aggressive and nonsensical. Buildings stand impossibly tall and crooked without support, colourful somnium plants grow wild and unchecked, and ravenous Shades stalk the dark alleys in search of an unsuspecting meal.

Further in, towards the heart of Composure and the highest concentration of humanity, the cityscape embodies the logic of those that live within it. The architecture is anachronistic, due to the loose relationship of time between the Dreamscape and the waking world, but it lines up much more consistently with real human structures. The sky above the city is a permanent inky black, making it impossible to tell time by any kind of external light, but the residents of Composure have found another way.

Periodically, the Dreamscape's host shifts in its sleep, loosening its control on the Dreamscape for a few short moments. During this time, the architecture of Composure will warp and move around as the wild unpredictability of dreaming takes over, before returning to relative stability until the next shift. These periods between shifts are referred to as Cycles and used to mark time in Composure.

Residents of the Dreamscape are not physically within the space, and as such their forms are not made of flesh and blood. Rather, they are made up of Consciousness, manifesting as a fine white dust, held together by the Will of each Dreamer. The strength of a Dreamer's Will diminishes if they are 'physically' harmed in some way, or upon exposure to the abyssal Dark on the outskirts of the city, causing Consciousness to leak out of their form and dissolve into the air around them.

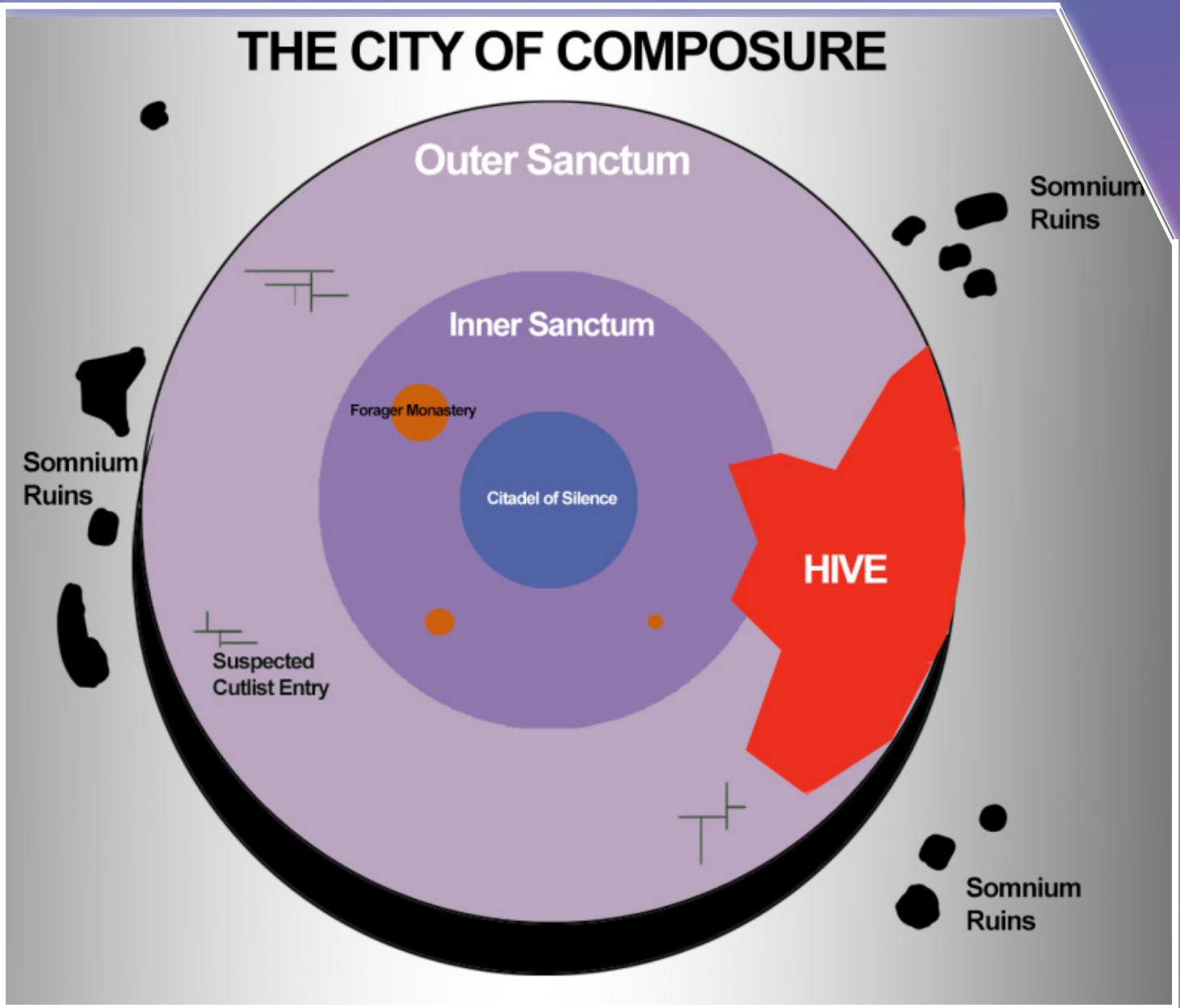
When Consciousness is let out, it dissolves directly into the host, feeding it and sustaining its slumber. The city's governing faction, known as the Ordo Silentium, have made it their mission to keep the host asleep eternally, and so all citizens are required to pay a Consciousness tax every three cycles.

GM Notes

All the key terms in these introductory pages are detailed further in the glossary at the back of the book.

The length of a cycle isn't defined, nor is it entirely consistent, but it's the most reliable way of marking the passage of time that exists in the Dreamscape. In terms of fitting these into your game, we recommend standaring each session as one cycle's worth of time.

General City Map



Map of Composure

HISTORY

History I

The Dormant, The Dreamers and The Dark.

Thousands of years ago, an unknown creature fell from space and crashed into the Earth. Upon its arrival, the creature caused a psychic implosion that absorbed the consciousness of every living creature for miles in every direction, leaving blank-eyed corpses of humans and animals alike. The impact force was enough to knock the creature into a deep slumber, and satiated with the essence of its original victims, it began to dream. The dreams of people across the globe were invaded by swirling archways of shadow and soft whispers that beckoned them by name. Eventually, a handful of people gave in and passed through the arches and found themselves trapped within an endless abyss of swallowing Dark.

These peoples' presence created a pocket in the void, and as they pined for the safety of their homes in the waking world, the pocket began to grow and take shape. As more people ventured into the abyss, they dreamt of shelter and security, and before long the pocket became a small settlement. While there was no Sun or Moon, the presence of these Dreamers created light, and the settlement flourished.

However, the Dreamers that had been on the outer edges of the implosion felt the familiar tug of the creature's hungering mind and knew that its initial intake of consciousness was all but dried up. Without a more refined method of feeding the creature, they began to carve gashes into their forms, offering tithes of Consciousness to the creature to keep it from waking up. Because of this, the creature became known as 'The Dormant'.

History II

The Stirring and The Emergence of Factions.

Soon after the discovery of magic, Composure declined into a state of disorder. While the city was under loose governance from the first Dreamers, they were spread far too thin across city development to stop the formation of rogue factions. Gangs of Dreamers scrambled for power, searching for ways to increase their magic potency and murdering all who opposed them. Some became powerful enough to exit the Dreamscape entirely, returning to the waking world and continuing life as normal there. Fresh Dreamers still arrived at a steady rate, but most were found by and indoctrinated into these gangs before they even knew what was going on. Most of the first Dreamers were assassinated, and the ones that weren't were forced to go into hiding. Composure was at war, and with the first Dreamers powerless to enforce the Consciousness tax, the Dormant's supply began to run thin.

History II

The Stirring and The Emergence of Factions.

Continued.

GM Notes

Specific locations/time periods aren't named here because they're not particulary important to the settings. Don't worry about little things like alteration of the course of human history (unless you want to!), this exposition is here to give you some context about what the Dreamscape is and how it functions. This guidebook intends gameplay to take place entirely within the city of Composure bu sprinkling in real-world lore can help to ground the setting for the players.

Soon after the discovery of magic, Composure declined into a state of disorder. While the city was under loose governance from the first Dreamers, they were spread far too thin across city development to stop the formation of rogue factions. Gangs of Dreamers scrambled for power, searching for ways to increase their magic potency and murdering all who opposed them. Some became powerful enough to exit the Dreamscape entirely, returning to the waking world and continuing life as normal there. Fresh Dreamers still arrived at a steady rate, but most were found by and indoctrinated into these gangs before they even knew what was going on. Most of the first Dreamers were assassinated, and the ones that weren't were forced to go into hiding. Composure was at war, and with the first Dreamers powerless to enforce the Consciousness tax, the Dormant's supply began to run thin.

The Dormant grew restless, and the Dark lapping at the edges of the city washed through the outer rings like a tidal wave. It claimed thousands of Dreamers, dissolving them on contact, before receding back to the edges of the city. Some of this Dark, infused with the raw Consciousness of its victims, soaked into the ground and laid the foundation for new and twisted forms of life.

This was the reality check that the remaining first Dreamers needed. The city's residents saw firsthand the horrors wrought by allowing the Dormant to starve for too long, and many of the gangs disbanded, once again swearing fealty to the first Dreamers. Some still refused to yield, but without their numbers to support them they were forced to the now-deserted outer rings. Led by the wisest among them, a woman known simply as The Matriarch, the first Dreamers regained their hold on Composure and established themselves as the Ordo Silentium.

The Ordo Silentium first move was to establish tax collection branches in each district of the city. Previously, the Consciousness tax had been a stern suggestion at best, but now citizens were required to register themselves and submit for tax collection every three cycles. To enforce this, the Ordo Silentium founded a sub-faction known as the Sentinels, tasked with the sole purpose of tracking down tax evaders and collecting their dues.

History II

The Stirring and The Emergence of Factions.

Continued.

The marginalised few that remained in opposition to the tax banded together, first to survive the harsh environment of the outer city limits but later to begin working towards their common ends. Some became Hunters, silent assassins that slink unnoticed through the inner city and take out Ordo Silentium officials in an attempt to disrupt their oppressive regime and usher in a new order. Others became Cultists, revering the Dormant as a deity and intending to awaken it. Thousands of cycles later at current time, all of these factions still persist, locked in a power struggle to determine the fate of the city.

The Outer Rings

Somnium, Siphon and Shades.

GM Notes

This page and the next are here to clarify the semantics of previously mentioned concepts. If anything is still not defined clearly enough, check the glossary at the back of the book for more information.

It took a long time before Dreamers began venturing out of the inner rings after the Stirring. The streets are dimly lit at best, uneven cobbles and building fronts stained with residual Dark. Alleyways feel narrow and oppressive, and in many places, architecture has fully collapsed into ruin. Of the buildings still standing, windows are dark, and bricks jut out at odd angles.

When the Dark receded, some of it soaked into the cracks and gaps in the ground. The raw Consciousness of the Dreamers it claimed went with it, fertilising the ground beneath the streets. A plant began to grow from every available crevice, with long snaking vines and dimly glowing bulbs. This plant, known as Somnium, is a product of human Consciousness, and therefore contains the essence of humanity. Different colours denote various aspects of human mentality, the most common of which bearing stark white bulbs that contain a small amount of Consciousness. These plants are useful to Dreamers, but they react negatively to the turbulence of human thought, so they only grow within the outer rings of the city.

This fertilisation didn't just produce plants, though. Some Consciousness was planted in high enough concentrations to contain echoes of its previous humanity. These grew into twisted creatures of Dark known as Shades. Shades take various shapes, mostly humanoid, and are characterised by their pitch black forms and abundant eyes. Shades have animalistic intelligence, and as servants of the Dormant they hunt down any Dreamers foolish enough to delve into the outer rings.

The Outer Rings

Somnium, Siphon and Shades.

Continued.

Some areas in the outer rings, especially those sparsely populated before the Stirring, didn't have enough Consciousness in them to grow anything. In these places, the Dark remains just below the ground, clumping together and coagulating into solid Dark. This is known as Siphon, and the Scholars found that it can be used to trap Consciousness as it leaks from a Dreamer. Siphon is used by the Sentinel and Hunter factions, as well as being a key component of Tokens, the primary currency used in the inner rings.

The Inner Rings

Currency, Taxation and Residence.

In the inner rings, life is much closer to how it is in the waking world. The sky is still jet-black, but the streets are lit up in gentle shades of pink and blue by swirling, luminescent fog. Streetlamps and open windows provide synthetic light, and the clustered high-rise apartments are alive with bustling activity. The streets are dotted with shopfronts, restaurants and bars.

Shops in the city are supported directly by the Ordo Silentium. Their currency is Tokens, which are proof of having sacrificed extra Consciousness to the Dormant. Tokens are given directly back to Ordo Silentium representatives at the end of each cycle, and shop owners can request help with renovation, restock or other general store upkeep if they choose. Shops provide a reason for citizens to contribute more than their base tax, so the Ordo Silentium keeps them afloat (not that bankruptcy is ever a concern). With no need for standard living costs like food and bedding, shops are mostly concerned with selling cosmetics, clothes, and apartment décor. Restaurants don't sell food as we know it, but they found that pale somnium can be infused with memories of food from the waking world and shaped into perfect imitations as far as taste and texture are concerned.

The Inner Rings

Currency, Taxation and Residence.

Continued.

Tokens can be obtained at the tax collection booths scattered throughout the city. When paying tax or collecting tokens, Dreamers sign into these booths, and the operator uses a needle to administer a small pinprick. The needle is coated with a substance developed by the Scholars that functions like an anticoagulant, preventing their form from healing around that spot and allowing Consciousness to leak steadily for about a cycle's worth of time. The base tax amounts to one of these jabs every three cycles, but citizens can also choose to sacrifice extra consciousness in exchange for Tokens. Every extra jab is worth ten tokens.

Tokens contain a small amount of Siphon. These are held near the wounds, picking up traces of Consciousness and turning white. Only white tokens are legal tender, as a black token signifies that it has already been spent. When a white token is given to a vendor, the Siphon component is crushed, releasing the Consciousness back to the Dormant.

FACTIONS: ORDO SILENTIUM

History

The Ordo Silentium is the most powerful organisation in Composure, and functions as the city's primary governing force. They keep civil operations running, collect tax from the citizens, and prevent outbreaks of violence within the inner rings of the city. Overall, their goals are to maintain the city and keep the Dormant from waking up.

The Ordo Silentium was founded in the wake of the Stirring, formed by the Dreamers who ended the war. Leading this group was a Dreamer known only as The Matriarch, who remains the head of the Ordo Silentium to this day.

The Ordo Silentium's civil branches focus on the quality of life for citizens in general. They build, renovate, and upkeep the city's residential buildings, as well as providing work for business owners. They're also in charge of tax collection booths and currency distribution.

Members of the Ordo Silentium are not exempt from paying tax, although they are entitled to a reduced fee.

Factional Alliances

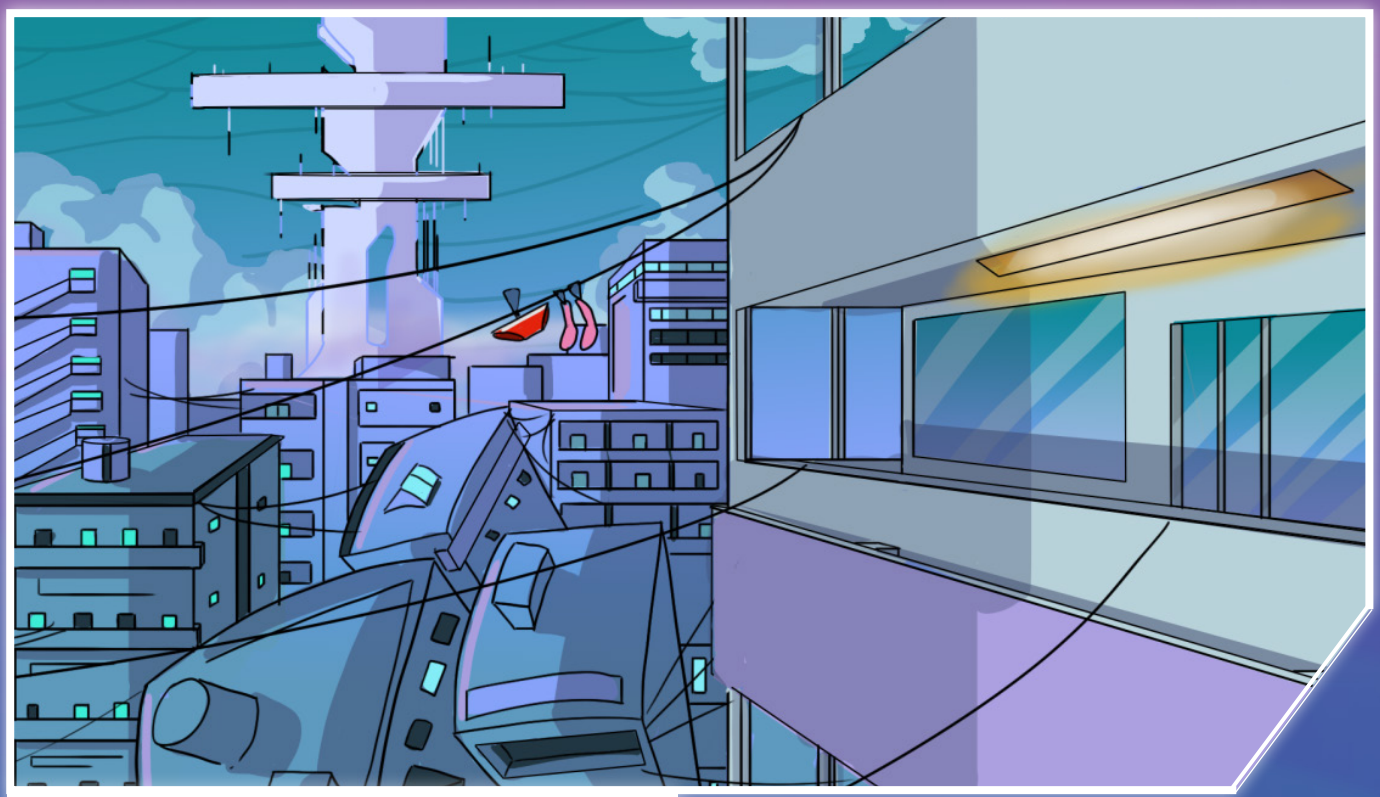
Ordo Silentium controls the territory in the heart of Composure.

In the very centre of the city lies Arkem Silentium (The Citadel of Silence), a beautiful and mighty fortress that keeps a watchful eye over all goings-on in Composure. Its highest tower contains the Factional Senate room, the meeting place for representatives of all officially recognised factions.

Places of Interest

Ordo Silentium controls the territory in the heart of Composure. In the very centre of the city lies the Citadel of Silence, a beautiful and mighty fortress that keeps a watchful eye over all goings-on in Composure. Its highest tower contains the Factional Senate room, the meeting place for representatives of all officially recognised factions.

Several tax collection booths are stationed in each main district of the city. These are small buildings where citizens must check in every three cycles to pay their tax. They can also come to these booths to exchange their Consciousness for tokens, which can be used at Ordo Silentium-subsidised businesses, including restaurants and bars within the inner districts of Composure.



Citadel of Silence

FACTIONS: SENTINELS

History

In the wake of the Stirring, Ordo Silentium sanctioned the forming of a faction of enforcers, who became known as Sentinels. Their role was to maintain order in Composure and ensure that the Dormant would not wake. They were tasked with collecting tax from the Dreamers in the form of consciousness, a necessary sacrifice to keep the Dormant asleep.

Dreamers who fail to show for collection in their appropriate cycle warrant a visit from a Sentinel, to have their overdue tax collected and a warning issued. Those who warrant repeat visits from the Sentinels disappear from public records, to be sacrificed to the Dormant.

Alongside finding solitary tax evaders, they also run infrequent raids on communities that avoid taxation such as the Hive of the Hunters. Due to the small size of the Sentinel faction, these raids are never enough to topple the communities, but they usually manage to collect a few sacrifices in the process.

Sentinel culture revolves heavily around the sanctity of sacrificing oneself to the Dormant, so while the Sentinels are exempt from paying tax, they ritualistically carve markings into themselves. Sentinels are heavily mutated, focusing their magic on cultivating helpful mutations from these markings such as extra eyes and limbs.

Factional Alliances

The Sentinels work directly underneath the Ordo Silentium, at the same tier as the Scholars and the Foragers. While the purpose of the Sentinels is understood and respected, the Scholars keep a healthy distance from them, and the Foragers revile them as dealers of death.

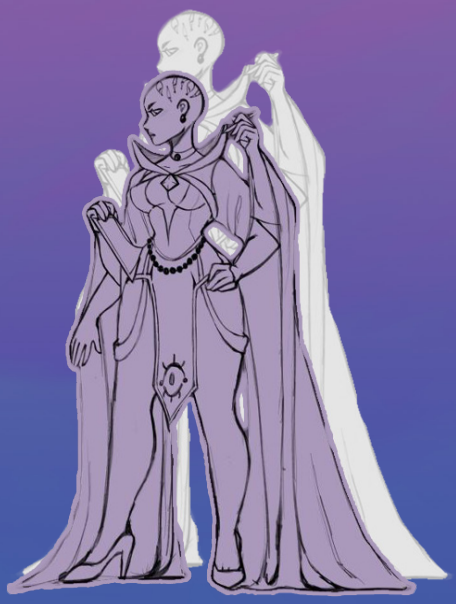
Places of Interest

In the core of Sentinel territory exists The Feeding Chamber, a bottomless pit with a spiral staircase around the edge. The swallowing Dark exists in all directions, including straight down. This is where Sentinels take their living sacrifices, throwing them into the pit after carving deep gashes into them to speed up the rate of consciousness leaking.

The Sentinels have set up tax collection centres throughout the city in all districts except for The Hive. Dreamers can come to these centres to sacrifice consciousness in exchange for tokens.

Key Characters

High Scholar
Intelia



High Sentinels are the top tier of their faction and concern themselves mostly with delegating work to their subordinates. As a High Sentinel, Intelia keeps a list of citizens that have been noted absent from tax collection, and dispatches other Sentinels to find them and collect their dues. She also deals personally with repeat offender cases, as repeat tax evasion is punishable by sacrifice. If the players are in a position where they are required to pay tax, and they fail to pay it on time more than once, Intelia will personally show up and try to take them to the feeding pit. Otherwise, players can be recruited by her for Sentinel contracts.

Relations: While the Sentinels' primary concern is keeping the tax system running smoothly, the Ordo Silentium will often provide them with secondary contracts. These are given directly to Intelia, whose job it is to fill those contracts with suitable people. She would be immediately removed from her position if she ever admitted it to the OS, but she has been known to occasionally recruit outsiders if no Sentinels are available or suitable.

Intelia spent a hundred cycles personally trying to catch Cheshire, not long after he initially came into the city. While she's realized that her efforts were futile, she still hopes to catch him one day, and is constantly listening out for whispers of him or Wonderland. She can potentially be bribed with information about Cheshire by the players.

FACTIONS: SCHOLARS

History

From the very beginning of the Dreamscape, Dreamers have been unveiling its secrets and navigating its science. Those with a particular penchant for this began working together, pooling ideas and discoveries for the good of all.

The scholars were aware that the Dormant would only remain asleep so long as it had a steady supply of consciousness, so they would regularly make sacrifices to ensure this was the case. As Composure grew, the Dormant's need for consciousness grew with it and it became increasingly difficult for the scholars to make the necessary sacrifices.

The scholars were pivotal in ending The Stirring and were great proponents in the founding of Ordo Silentium. Since then, they have worked closely with Ordo Silentium to develop new ways of maintaining Composure. The faction of Sentinels was commissioned and made responsible for meeting sacrificial quotas, taking pressure off the scholars and allowing them to focus more on their studies.

In time, a sub-faction of the scholars emerged, known as the scientist's guild. They dedicate themselves to discovering the inner workings of the dreamscape from an earthly science perspective. Many members of the scientist's guild consider themselves to be better than the other scholars, as they practice 'real science'. Most of them are scientists in the waking world and consider the scientific method to be the only effective way to learn more about the dreamscape.

Scholars will often venture down the staircase of The Feeding Chamber, to see what knowledge lies within the Dark. Few ever return, and the ones that do are permanently changed. Anyone that returns from the Dark constantly leaks consciousness, until eventually, they fade away into nothing. While it seems like they want to communicate the knowledge they find, they lose the ability to speak in any comprehensible language, and their drawings/writings are only the frantic scribbles of those who have ventured beyond insanity.

Factional Alliances

The scholars were pivotal in ending The Stirring and were great proponents in the founding of Ordo Silentium. Since then, they have worked closely with Ordo Silentium to develop new ways of maintaining Composure. The faction of Sentinels was commissioned and made responsible for meeting sacrificial quotas, taking pressure off the scholars and allowing them to focus more on their studies.

Scholars and Foragers get along well. Although Scholars are forbidden from entering Forager outposts, they can call upon Foragers for aid should they be attacked by the twisted creatures of the outer rings.

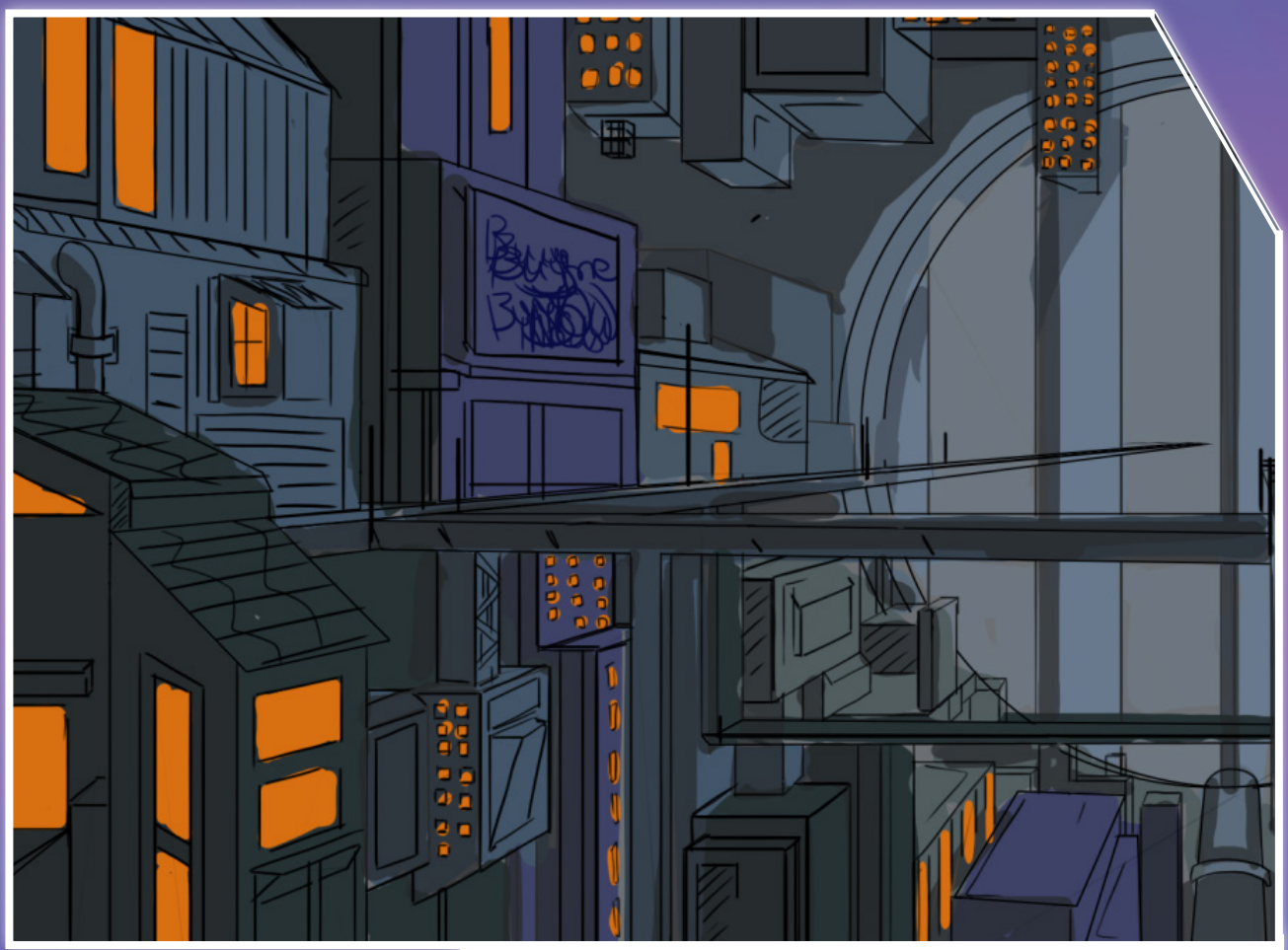
Places of Interest

Most Scholars do their work in the Libraries, a series of underground chambers that all link up to a large domed structure. These chambers contain all the knowledge that the Scholars have acquired in the Dreamscape. The chambers are ever expanding, to accommodate more room for storage of books and places of research.

Located underneath Citadel of Silence is a series of laboratories dedicated to work that is deemed to be of high importance by Ordo Silentium. The group of scholars there contains a high concentration of scientist's guild members, who are more favoured to working in a laboratory setting.

Scholars live in tunnels that connect The Libraries, long pipes filled with ramshackle buildings that span almost the diameter of the city, just below the ground. Scholars aren't bound to any of the rules and regulations of surface living and choose to live modestly. They're rarely home, spending most of their time either writing in the Libraries or doing field work in the outer rings.

Places of Interest



Scholar Tunnels

FACTIONS: FORAGERS

History

Since the discovery of Somnium in the early years of Composure, there have been Dreamers who have dedicated their time to locating and harvesting it. As the city of Composure grew, these foragers had to venture further and further into the swallowing dark to find viable Somnium plants. Soon, only the bravest and most composed dreamers had what it took to be foragers. This necessity gave rise to the Forager faction. This collection of people chose to live their lives on the outskirts of composure, harvesting Somnium and raising future generations of foragers. Because of this, foragers are often somewhat removed from society. They are very meditative, and they have little knowledge of political situations beyond who is hiring them.

Foragers have been warned away from making deliveries to The Hive by city officials. They refuse to knowingly sell Somnium to Hunters, and they've had enough run-ins beyond the wall to know they should be avoided altogether.

Places of Interest

Recruits are trained in the Forager Monastery, a small collection of dormitories and classrooms within the Citadel of Silence. Here, they learn meditation techniques for calming their emotional state, making them able to live among the Somnium farms without damaging the crops. Attached to the Forager Monastery is a bar that caters to Foragers who enter the city for trading or meetings with Ordo Silentium.

Foragers in the field are assigned to outposts, usually created from ruins that remain stained with Dark. Outposts are quite small, but there are dozens of them scattered among the outer rings. Between all of them, they provide all the Somnium that Composure could ever need.

FACTIONS: FORAGERS

Factional Alliances

Foragers are technically employed by the Ordo Silentium, although they don't have much contact with their employers outside of delivering Somnium into the city to be distributed. They are steadfast enough to survive on their own in the outer rings, declining offers for protection from Sentinels. Some are even strong enough to leave the relative safety of their outposts, and lend a hand to Scholars in need of a safe escort.

Key Characters

Grand Culturist
Trunx

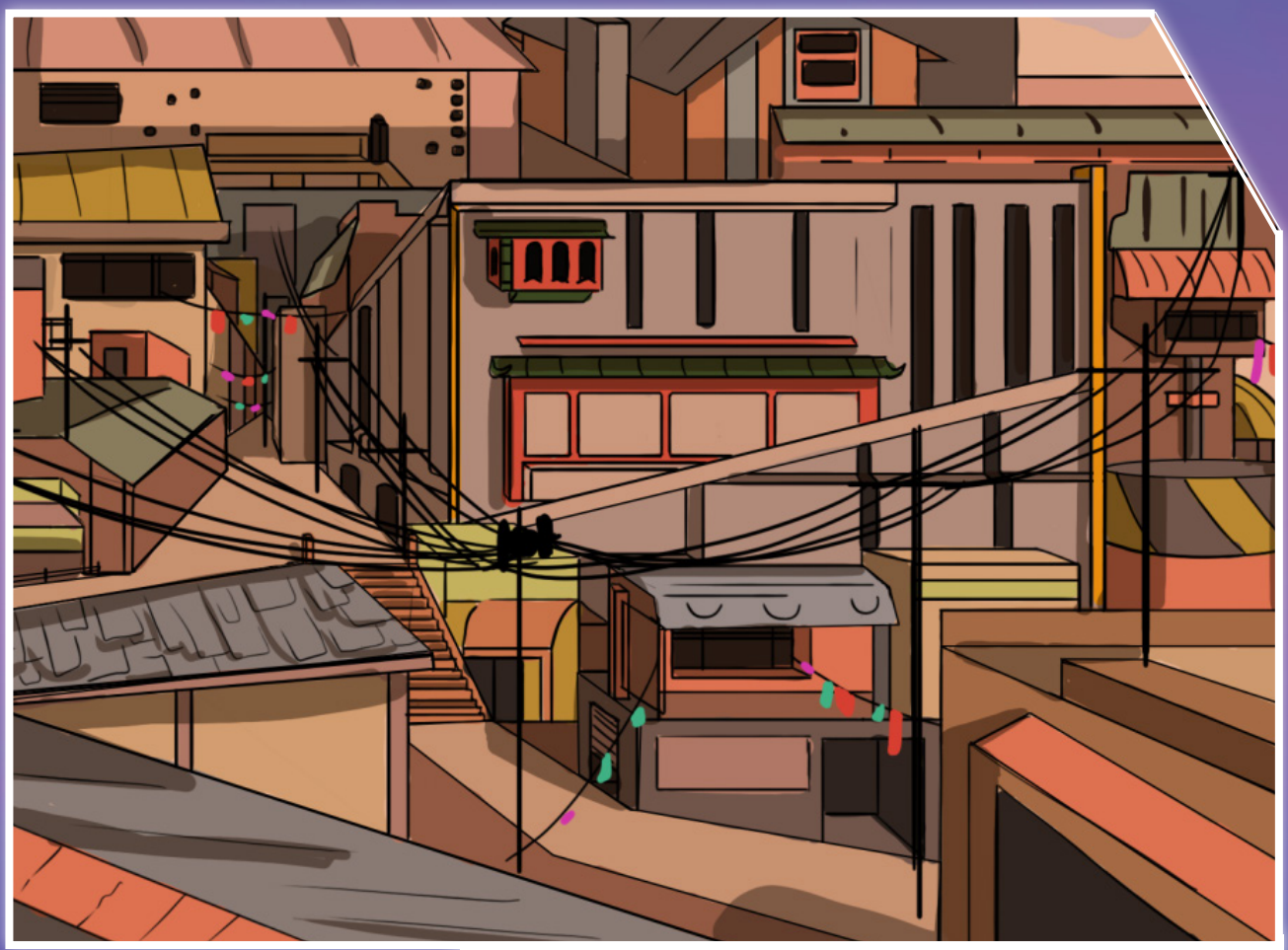
Trunx is the senior horticulturalist of Forager outpost 03. He personally delivers all shipments from the outpost to the Somnium Redistribution Centre in the city centre. When he's not running deliveries, he's either tending to the somnium plants at outpost 03, or he's leading meditation at the Forager Initiates' Monastery.

Trunx is one of the oldest people in the city, having come in shortly after the first Dreamers. Forager practices lend themselves to a long, simple life, and Trunx is a living example. Relations: Trunx is a bit of a hermit, and only talks to the people he needs to work with. The Matriarch trusts him implicitly, and they've shared plenty of secrets with one another. Trunx and Intelia know of each other but have never spoken. One cultivates life, the other brings death, and while they respect the necessity of each other's trades they both refuse to interact.

Trunx is one of only a handful of people to have survived an attack from Nyven. Other Forager outposts are raided from time to time by Hunters including Nyven himself, but Trunx's reputation ensures that outpost 03 is never a target. Cheshire knows of him, and can accurately confirm or deny rumours, but has never interacted with him. On the other hand, Trunx is completely unaware of the existence of Wonderland or Cheshire.

Trunx is well known as a figure between the citizens of the inner rings, but the only people who approach him on his deliveries are those looking to enlist as Foragers. He takes these initiates to the Monastery and runs them through their hundred cycles of training, and then The Matriarch delegates them to an outpost.

Places of Interest



Forager Monastery

LAWLESS FACTION: HUNTERS

History

There was no single inciting event for the Hunters' formation, they built themselves up slowly over time. When the Ordo Silentium took over the city, some people became suspicious of their motives and ventured away from the central district. They started to gather in a relatively empty part of the city, which twisted and churned to mirror their contempt, and became the Hive.

In contrast with the Sentinels, they hunt dreamers for their consciousness which they use selfishly for their own strength and magic. They have turned themselves into apex predators, with their bodies mutated into weapons for the sole purpose of hunting.

Every Hunter carries a string of black pearls. These are clandestine technology adapted from the Sentinels, as each pearl can trap the consciousness of a dreamer before it is absorbed by the Dormant. Hunters can swallow full pearls to gain "magic" abilities for a short period. Some Hunters are only slightly mutated and conceal their pearls, but others are barely still humanoid and wear their pearls in the open since there's little point to keeping them hidden.

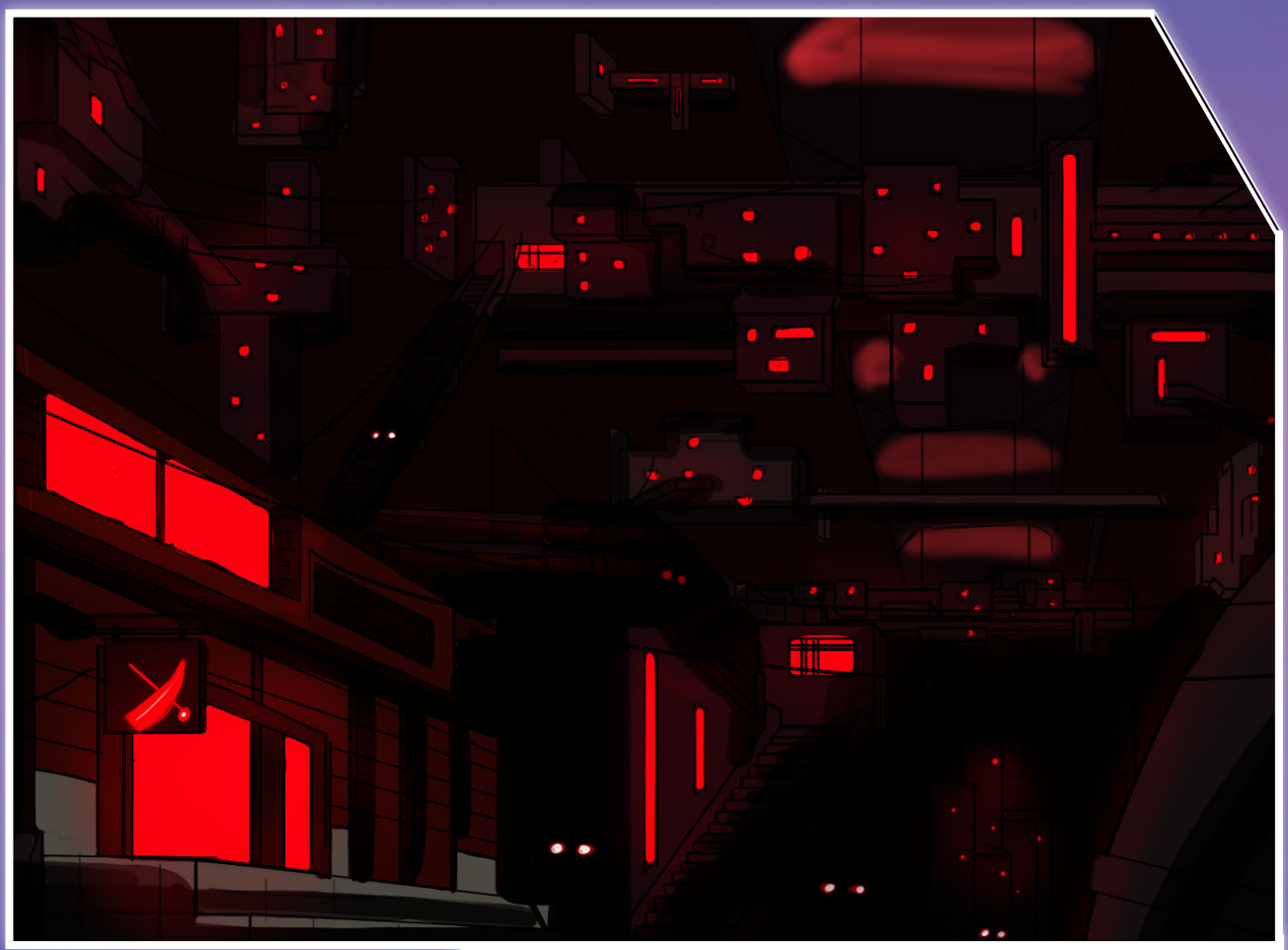
Overall, the Hunters are an individualist faction, but given their shared living space and ambitions they each contribute to the faction's goals. Hunters remember the original purpose of their faction and dedicate themselves to striking out against Ordo Silentium and its allies. Some Hunters (especially newer members) spend most of their time gathering Somnium to keep the Hive's denizens well-fed, but more experienced ones will venture into inner Composure and go after Ordo Silentium officials.

Places of Interest

Most Hunters live in the district known as the Hive, a huge mound that lies a short distance from central Composure. The mound is both filled with and covered in ramshackle houses, most of them very old and run-down. The other factions don't interact with this area much; There is no tax collection centre, and they don't get Somnium supplies from the Foragers.

The most popular place in the Hive is a dive bar called the Tooth and Nail, where Hunters can be contracted for any job, provided the pay is high enough.

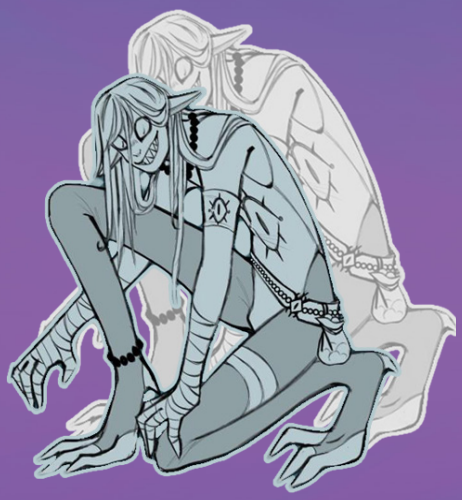
Places of Interest



The Hive, Tooth and Nail

Key Characters

Prince of Pearls
Nyven



While the hierarchy of the Hunter faction doesn't support having leaders, there are definitely some more infamous than others. And while people don't know his name, they whisper about the beast in the darkness, the shadow on the rooftops, the tall man that rips you apart and catches your soul as it pours from your broken form. Even without being lucid, Nyven is a ruthlessly efficient Hunter, and wears his pearls proudly.

Nyven does occasional contract jobs in exchange for consciousness and information, but most of his hunts are on his own terms. He ventures into the outer limits, gathering rare somnium to trade in the Hive, and he's killed several dozen Foragers in these expeditions. His overarching goal, like most Hunters, is to eventually overthrow the Ordo Silentium and take control of the city, so quite a few government officials go missing as well.

As an NPC, players can recruit Nyven for jobs, as long as the pay is enough to warrant taking the contract. Likewise, if the players provide a good enough reason for any powerful figure to want them dead, Nyven can be tasked with hunting the players down instead.

Relations: Nyven is well-respected/somewhat feared within the Hive. Everyone in there knows who he is, and he's often out on the town. He spends a lot of time at the Hive's most popular dive bar, the Tooth and Nail. He also frequents Wonderland and is a good friend of Cheshire's. If players want to find him, either of these spots are the best place to start, and Cheshire can provide that information.

Nyven will take contracts from any person or party not aligned with the Ordo Silentium. He's one of the few Hunters old enough to remember the formation of the OS, and he's survived enough raids by the Feeders to hate them with a passion stronger than most. His main aspiration is to be the one to kill The Matriarch and claim the highest seat of power within the city.

As an enemy, Nyven is almost imperceptible if he's trying to hide. If the players go up against him, use the environment to his advantage. He can blend into shadows and travel between them, as well as being able to crawl across walls and ceilings, so make him appear everywhere. Players shouldn't know when he's going to strike, or where from.

GM Notes

Notes for playing Nyven: Nyven speaks in a low growl. His speech patterns are old, but he comes off as intelligent. He can easily be tempted to do jobs with information that would help him in taking down an OS official.

LAWLESS FACTION: CULTISTS

History

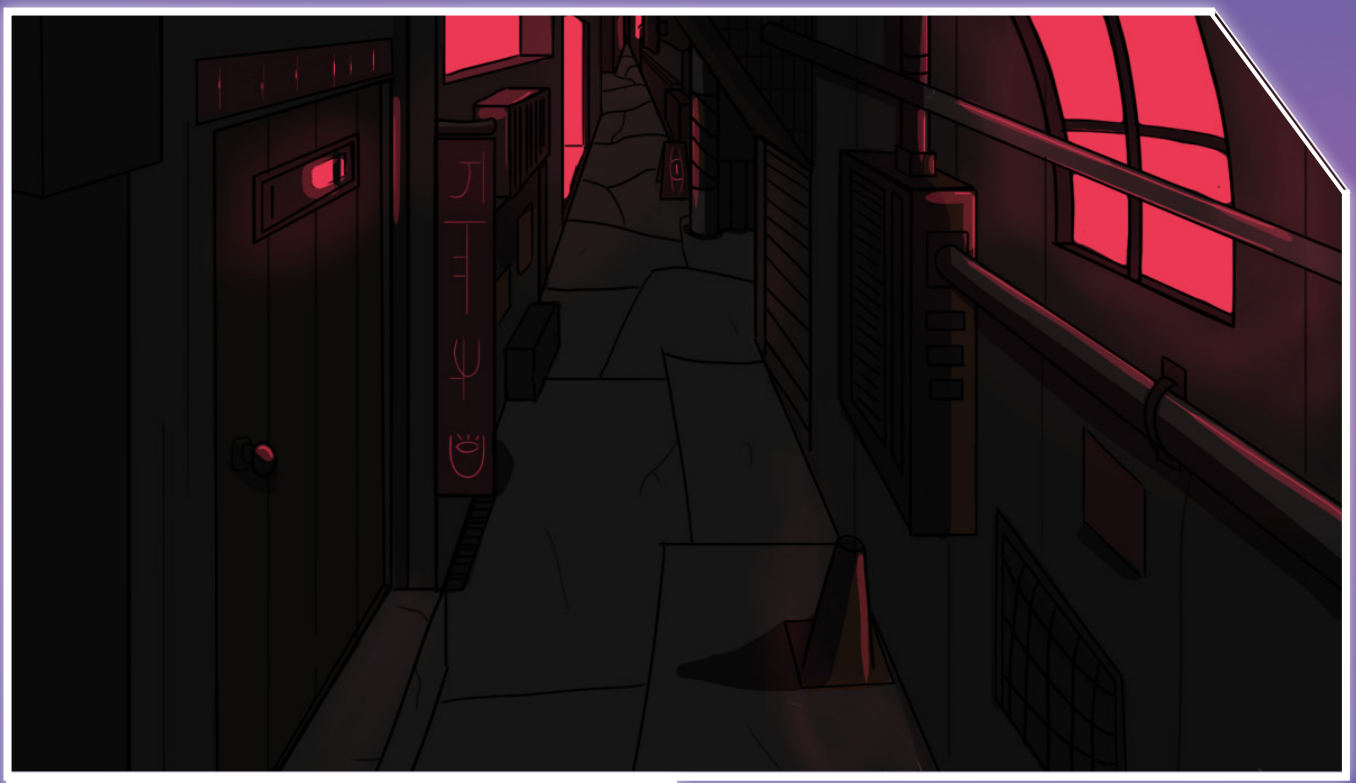
Cultists believe that by waking The Dormant they will earn its favour. They are anarchists that seek to disrupt the social structure enough to end The Dormant's slumber. The cultists have been around since the early days of Composure when the number of dreamers began increasing beyond close familiarity. In those days before Ordo Silentium, they incited chaos and war in an attempt to shock The Dormant awake in the period now known as "The Stirring". They were almost successful, but the rest of the Dreamers realised that the beast was stirring and pledged to cease hostilities at risk of losing composure for good. Most cultists of the time were either demoralised by the new, more structured society, or lost their nerve in the face of potential annihilation. The few that remained passed on their teachings and began to weave their way into the fabric of society, biding their time until they are ready for their final strike.

The cultists are not an officially recognised faction, and most Dreamers are either unaware of their existence or believe them to have been eradicated long ago.

Environments

Cultists use empty buildings on the outskirts of composure as meeting places. The interior of whichever building they choose for their meeting will become their base once they enter.

Environments



Cultist Alleyways

NEUTRAL PARTY: WONDERLAND

History

Wonderland is the place to be if you want to fly under the radar, or just have relaxing drink. This establishment is run by Cheshire, a young Dreamer with an intoxicating personality and a toothy grin. He runs Wonderland as a truly neutral safe haven for all, free from the watchful eyes of Ordo Silentium, and undisturbed by the darker forces at play in Composure. Most citizens of composure have found themselves in Wonderland at least once, including members of factions that oppose Ordo Silentium. Cheshire picks up a lot of information from his patrons, and takes secrets seriously, but if anyone ever needs a favour, Cheshire will find volunteers. If a dreamer is ever unsure what to do with their time in composure, Wonderland can be a great starting point for all kinds of adventures.

Key Characters

The Dreamweaver
Cheshire

Cheshire is the owner and bartender of his tavern in central Composure, Wonderland. He is a true neutral force - all are welcome in the tavern, and he's always ready to greet his patrons with a smile, a drink and protection from the prying eyes of anyone searching for them. Cheshire is relatively new to the city, having only been there for a few hundred cycles, but between his powers of lucidity and his intoxicating personality, Wonderland has become one of the most popular places in town.

Cheshire talks to his patrons a lot and has plenty of information to share. He always knows a guy who knows a guy who wants a favour done, and if the party is looking for a job to do, he's the best person to turn to. He's also very familiar with the power of lucid dreaming and can serve as a great way to tell the party about their newfound abilities.
Relations: Most people in central Composure have been to Wonderland at least once, including members of the factions that aren't aligned with the Ordo Silentium. Cheshire knows a bit about all his patrons, since he's hard not to talk to, but he takes secrets seriously so it's difficult to get him to give out sensitive information.

Cheshire and The Matriarch are at a resigned stalemate. Cheshire declined an offer of a position of power within the Ordo Silentium to do his own thing, and while he doesn't directly work for any one faction, he also doesn't pay his tax. He can be impossible to find if needs be, and the Feeders gave up searching for him a long time ago after apprehending 12 of his copies.

NEUTRAL PARTY: WHITE SPACE

History

There exists a place within the dreamscape known simply as the White Space. The White Space is an area that can be entered at any time, from anywhere, if a dreamer is ever in need of a safe place to escape from the city for a short time. Visually, it appears to be an endless plane of pure white light. An individual referred to only as The Steward controls the white space and can manifest practically any object that they deem necessary. The most common furnishings are sleek and simple tables and chairs for dreamers to sit, catch their breath, and plan their next moves in Composure.

Some dark beings in the dreamscape have the ability to prevent the white space from manifesting, so it's not a viable escape from every encounter.

NEUTRAL PARTY: CITIZENS

History

The citizens of Composure, Dreamers, almost all live their lives within the protective walls of composure. They are dispersed throughout several districts, each controlled by different factions. Dreamers are not necessarily aligned with the faction who's district they reside in but would usually relocate for faction-related work. Some Dreamers have no alignment whatsoever, and just live out their cycles doing whatever they do best and following the laws outlined by those in charge. There are many independent businesses throughout composure that are run by everyday citizens, just as there are establishments run by faction officials.

ITEMS: SOMNIUM

History

Somnium is the closest thing the Dreamscape has to plants.

Somnium growths are dark and wilted vines that smother the regions beyond composure's walls. They grow pale bulbs containing the only source of consciousness other than living minds, albeit in tiny amounts.

Pale Somnium is used to reduce mutations and restore consciousness of individuals that have had theirs sapped by prolonged exposure to the Dreamscape, this means a constant supply is required.

Pale Somnium can be molded like clay to recreate the experience of a memory, provided the memory is vivid enough and the owner is passionate enough. This allows 'memories' of drinks to be served at bars, and even memories of food!

The Foragers faction exists to brave the swallowing Dark and gather Somnium from the chaos. Farming efforts have been largely unsuccessful as the mere presence of active minds deters it. The Foragers adopt a meditative lifestyle to calm their minds, and because of this they usually have their heads in the clouds.

Coloured Somium

In rare cases Somnium has been seen shifting colors to reflect certain traits of the mind. This process is poorly understood as Somnium plants are deterred by active minds, but are also unable to develop these mental traits without human minds.

One theory suggest colored Somnium grows near the remains of dead dreamers, their minds are inactive and won't disturb Somnium growth but the mental aptitude of the dreamer remains. This allows Somnium plants to feed of the dead individual like fertilizer, undisturbed.

Coloured Somnium can be used to give a brief boost to Stats. Red Somnium restores Will, Green Somnium gives a boost to Intellect for a brief period of time, and so on.

ITEMS: SOMNIUM

Red Somium

‘The Sanguine bulb stings to touch.’

Red Somnium bulbs are a common necessity, but that doesn’t make them cheap.

Red Somnium can be consumed by a dreamer by crushing the bulb in their palm, allowing them to absorb concentrated liquid will.

Red Somnium is found in one of two variants, Standard or Refined.

Standard Somnium restores 4 points of Will, most markets of Composure charge 40 tokens for a single dose.
Refined Somnium restores 6 points of Will and is rarely seen, a single dose typically costs 60 Tokens.

Orange Somium

‘The mere presence fills you with confidence’

Orange Somnium Bulbs are uncommon, occasionally found in the hands of more established Traders. Orange Bulbs increases a Dreamer’s Enterprise modifier for one check by 2; and are typically sold for 50 tokens.

ITEMS: SOMNIUM

Cyan Somium

'You find the shape difficult to describe from memory'

Cyan Somnium Bulbs are rare, infrequently found in the hands of more established Traders. Cyan Bulbs increases a Dreamer's Imagination modifier for one check by 2; and are typically sold

Green Somnium

'The cold stability this verdant thing provides is... Daunting'

Green Somnium Bulbs are uncommon, occasionally found in the hands of more established Traders. Green Bulbs increases a Dreamer's Intellect modifier for one check by 2; and are typically sold for 50 tokens.

Purple Somnium

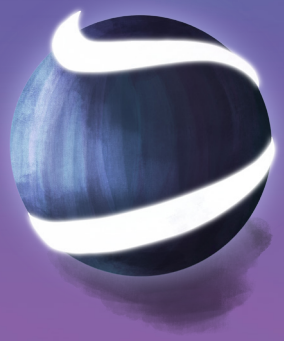
'Is it... Talking?'

Purple Somnium Bulbs are extremely rare, very few are even aware of their existence. The creation of this breed of Somnium would require someone with serious political influence to succumb to the swallowing dark and have Somnium grow in their death place. This even is extremely unlikely.

Purple Bulbs increase a Dreamer's Charisma modifier for one check by 2; and might be sold for at least 80 tokens. typically sold for 50 tokens.

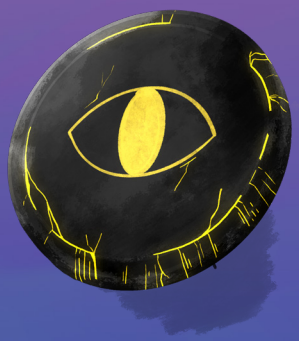
ITEMS: PEARLS & TOKENS

Pearls



Pearls are a form of Refined Siphon, an extremely rare material. Pearls can be used to absorb and store consciousness dust in large amounts before it dissolves. Pearls are primarily used by hunters to collect consciousness from their victims. They are rather rare and are usually only accessible through underground trade.

Tokens



Tokens are featureless currency used throughout composure. Dreamers can obtain tokens through trade or by sacrificing consciousness to Sentinels (Doing so earns 10 tokens). This sacrifice is mandatory every 3 cycles as tax, but Dreamers can do so as frequently as they like.

Mechanically, sacrificing consciousness reduces a characters maximum will by 1 for the duration of that play session (1 cycle). Players earn 10 tokens for each time they sacrifice will, and can do so until they have 1 maximum will remaining.

BESTIARY

Bio Rats

Bio-Rats scour the city's underbelly, greedily feeding off the feelings of disgust and sickness of Composure's residents while they hide in the cracks and nooks that dig deep into the city. They glow fiercely when fed and killing or injuring them in this state will cause them to release these emotions in a bright cloud. This cloud can incur sickness, nausea or disgust to any or breathe it in, and as such getting these pests under control is often a precarious procedure.

Moon Kitties

Moon Kittens embody the forgotten mischief of younger days and delight off causing problems for the many denizens of Composure. From theft to annoyance, to being loud when they need to be quiet and vice versa, they will insist on making any Lucid Dreamer's life difficult whenever possible. Coupled by a near-invisibility in darkness and ludicrous speed, avoiding these kitties wherever possible is probably the way to go.

BESTIARY

Curo Jelly

Floating around composure, hanging near streetlamps like moths, resting atop rooftops and bumping into any high ceilings are the Curo-Jellies. A very unintelligent creature, these glowing blobs of light are attracted to movement and other bright lights and thus make excellent sustained light sources. Their sting is relatively painless but will make the wounds glow for a short time, in a similar vein, destroying these simple creatures will result in a bright and sudden flash.

Sap Roach

Crawling between the walls and under the floorboards are the Sap-Roaches. While almost harmless individually, swarms of these insects can be quite dangerous, as they sap and steal the consciousness of dreamers. They danger is often relative to their size, and often times nests are never given the chance to grow particularly large but given the chance they can quickly become a problem.

BESTIARY

Shades

Composed of darkness the shades are manifestations that lurk in the mind of the dormant, a shell of what dreamers used to be. The city of Composure their home no more, they inhabit the outer rings wandering aimlessly. Despite their humanoid forms they morph into something new, something that shouldn't exist. Something as primordial as the Dormant itself. A twisted abomination, unfathomable to comprehend the shades are a sinister reflection of ones deepest fears. They know nothing except the act of feeding, to consume consciousness.

Void Hounds

With a form fused in a similar fashion to that of the shades, the void hounds prey upon those who terrorise their territory in outer Composure. They roam in packs with malicious intent with a salacious desire to make a feast of anyone they cross.

If one is unfortunate to hear their shrieking howl do beware, for it may already be too late.

ADVENTURE FUNNEL

Adventure

You find your dreams plagued by a long and snaking tunnel, invited by a featureless gray door. You spiral down and down… Until you finally emerge in a neglected and dark corner of Composure, the human city of the Dreamscape. You look down at the streets below from the building you found yourself in… The dark architecture here is smothered by inky black vines and illuminated by the infrequent bulbs of white Somnium, the only source of light this far out.

A gathering of distorted and hostile human beings catches your eye, churning flesh and twisting shadows are chasing a comparatively normal person. Just like you. You rush to help, and find more stray Dreamers had the same idea.

Following brief conflict you make your escape with the other newcomers… But unfortunately find yourself cornered in an alleyway by the moaning shades.

Before you consider your final prayer… A group of agile and thin humanoids charge in and slash the shades to dust, swept up by their blades into black-pearl jewelry and absorbed.

It's a group of vigilante hunters, turned 'do gooders'. Before you can get a word in they call you lot lucky, you're new around here and it's obvious.

They sheathe their weapons.

'There's someone charming you should meet.'

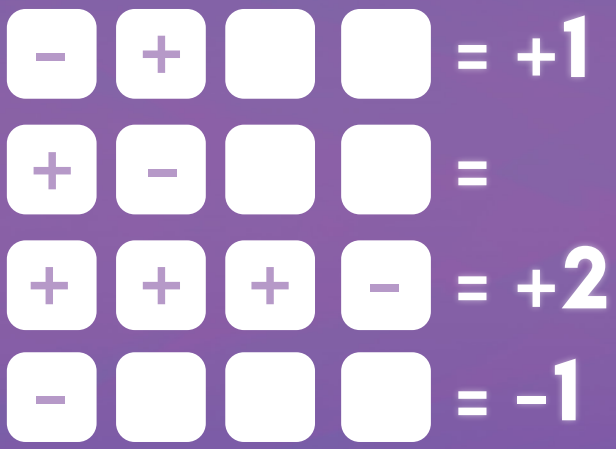
SYSTEM

Fate Rules and How To Play

The System and Character Sheet for Composure is largely based on the Fate Accelerated SRD and licensed under Creative Commons Attribution License (CC-BY). For the full license see 'Licenses'.

Rolling Outcomes

When character are faced with Challenges, FATE's system uses 6 sided dice to determine a character's performance in that scenario. This is called a 'performance check'.



FATE dice typically have 6 sides; two sides have a positive modifier (+), two sides have no modifier (blank), and two sides have a negative modifier (-).

Every '+' can be read as a +1, every 'blank' can be read as a 0, and every '-' can be read as a -1.

Stat modifiers determine a character's attunement to different parts of the mind. A character with a +3 in Intellect could be considered smarter than one with a -1 in Intellect.

Before rolling a check, the GM decides which stat modifier would be best suited for the situation and considers a Difficulty Class (DC) for the roll the player must beat. The player then adds the stat modifier to their roll to determine whether they pass the check and succeed or not.

DC Chart

GM Notes

Meeting of the DC of a check (A shift of 0) still passes.

Additionally, for most campaigns a DM shouldn't need to go above a DC of 6.

Difficulty Class Chart

-3	(Extremely easy to pass)
-2	(Very easy)
-1	(Easy)
0	(Relatively easy)
1	(Average)
2	(Medium Difficulty)
3	(Hard)
4	(Difficult)
5	(Very Difficult)
6	(Obscenely Difficult)
7	(Barely Possible)
8	(Almost Impossible)

Character Creation

For an empty Character sheet, See Appendix 1.
For a filled sheet see Appendix 2.

Dreamers

Dreamers are eccentric human beings that find their dreams plagued by the call of a mysterious pale door… And eventually find themselves pulled into The Dreamscape. Though The Dreamscape was never meant for their kind, many Dreamers have a vague purpose here...

Dreamers inhabit the dreamscape for a variety of reasons; sometimes by choice and sometimes not. Consider the following as examples for why your character has found themselves here.

Lucid Purpose
The waking life is lackluster, I hope to find purpose in The Dreamscape… Though is it really much better here?
A curse plagues my bloodline, perhaps the key to breaking it hides here… In shelves of forbidden libraries.
My real body is in a dangerous place, the longer I stay here the less likely I wake up at all… Why can't I wake up?
Someone close to me is missing, but I've always shared dreams with them. Perhaps I'll find them here?
I struggle to remember who I am, or why I am here.
I am struggling with an illness of the mind, I hope to unravel it here… Though I may end up disturbing myself further.
My family considers conquering The Dreamscape a rite of passage, I cannot leave without a prestigious accomplishment.

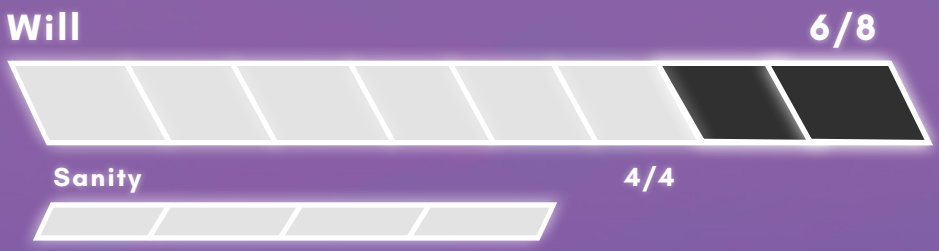
Will

Will is concentrated intent shaping the consciousness of an individual into a form. It is akin to HP.

All Dreamers start out with 8 Will, as they take damage their Will is reduced.

Will can be restored with Red Somnium, by resting at Composure until the next Cycle, or by taking on Mutations. For more information see “Mutations”

Once a character reaches 0 Will they receive a damage immunity for one turn and suffer from a paralyzing effect. For more information see “Identity Shock”



Stats/Traits

A Dreamer’s identity is made up of 4 Key stats. Charisma, Enterprise, Intellect, and Imagination.

CHARISMA	ENTERPRISE	INTELLECT	IMAGINATION

Stats/Traits

Continued.

Players can choose modifier distributions from the table below; any modifier can be assigned to a any slot. This is a permanent decision and cannot be changed after the first session.

Stat Arrays	
Average	**+2, +1, +1, 0**
Specialist	**+3, +1, 0, -1**
Well-rounded	**+2, +2, 0, 0**

The specific stats and their roles are defined below.

Charisma - Royal Purple

Control over others, Persuasion.

Charisma is used in social encounters, mediating heated conflict or bribing a deal is where Charisma shines its brightest.

Enterprise - Orange

Quick-thinking, Leadership, Performance under pressure.

Enterprise is the ability to think on your feet. Reactionary checks, acting under pressure and standard attack rolls require you to use Enterprise.

Intellect - Verdant Green

Logic, Reasoning, rationalization.

Some would argue logic doesn't have a place in the Dreamscape. But the city of Composure is founded on and thrives on order. Intellect is the founding force of Composure.

Intellect is used to rationalize the world around an individual, to apply dream logic in a consistent and reliable fashion and even to tell if a character is lying.

Stats/Traits

Imagination - Cyan

Familiarity with the unnatural, fluidity of the mind

Imagination defines the characters free mind, and how deeply they can immerse themselves in fantasy. Functionally similar to Wisdom in other TTRPGs.

Imagination is largely used to interact with the strange and unusual of The Dreamscape, to mold the abstract in a way akin to magic. For more information see 'Magic Stunts'.

Aspects

Aspects contain a character's defining features and personality. Anything that makes a character unique from "An intolerable flirt" to "Educated at a prestigious school".

'High Concept' summarizes a character's Identity in a short sentence.

'Trouble' outlines a character's dominant flaw. Simply put, whatever gets them into trouble.

The remaining spaces are for any other features, or abilities a character may have. For example…

A personality trait or belief: "Never leave a man behind".

Character's background or an important possession: "Life on the street", "I am directionless without my locket"

Relationship with people or organizations: "The Hunters will pay for what they did"

GM Notes

Players can reduce the amount of fate point they start each session with by 1 in order to earn another Practical Stunt. They can repeat this until they only refresh 1 point per ssesion. If they choose.

This cannot be done with Magic Stunts.

Stunts

Stunts are unique abilities proposed by players based on their character's skillset.

Stunts allow you to twist the rules of the game at the cost of one Fate point per use. Characters have 3 Fate points per session, these are refreshed at session start.

Each player starts out with 2 Practical stunts and 2 Magic stunts.

Practical Stunts

GM Notes

Practical stunts can never be changed and are decided when a character is first created. Magic stunts however can be changed once per cycle.

Practical stunts can be anything relating to the personality and life experience of a character. Some examples of practical stunts are given here, but feel free to create your own. The format for these Stunts is "Because of/As/Due to X, I can use Y effect." Keep in mind these cost 1 fate point to use.

Example Practical Stunts
Due to my experience in the Theatre, I gain a +2 to any Charisma checks I make while acting as someone I am not.
Because I have a hobby in Fencing, I can make two attacks in the same turn. As an Archer in the waking world, I can use my Intellect modifier for attacks instead of my Enterprise modifier when making a ranged attack.
As an Artist, I gain a +2 to any Imagination checks that involve artistry.
As a Visual learner, I can use my Imagination modifier instead of Intellect when trying to recall a memory that does not involve text.
As a Singer, I gain a +2 to any Charisma checks I make while singing.

Magic Stunts

GM Notes

The Magic DC always returns to 6 when switching out Magic stunts. Even when switching back to Magic Stunts you have already cast before.

Dreamers can channel their Consciousness to create "magical" effects. However, these take a lot of practice to use consistently, and options only avail themselves to Dreamers based on their acuity within each stat. Magic is a powerful tool, but it creates a temporary instability in Consciousness that opens the caster up to the mad randomness of the Dreamscape, potentially causing unwanted side effects.

Your two magic stunts correspond to your highest stat modifier - for example if you pick the Average stat array, and put your +2 in Enterprise, your magic stunts must be related to Enterprise. If you pick the Well-Rounded array, you must pick one magic stunt from each stat.
Additionally, At the end of each session and start of a new cycle players can choose to switch out their magic stunts for entirely new ones (With the DM's approval). However, in doing so the character forgets their proficiency with magic and the Magic DC returns to 6.

Magic DC

GM Notes

When making a magic check, be sure to use your imagination modifer regardless of your dominate stat. Even if you can only cast Enterprise based spells, you must still used Imagination for the check.

As new arrivals to Composure, your magic is unstable and difficult to control. However, with practice it becomes easier to manage. Your Magic DC starts at 6, and lowers by 1 every time you cast a spell, successful or not. This can get as low as 0. To successfully cast a spell, you must roll an Imagination check equal or greater to your Magic DC. If you roll below your DC, you still cast the spell, but the GM can add an unwanted side effect. Examples of magic stunts for each stat are given on the next page.

MAGIC DC

Charisma - Manipulation Magic

Control of others, Manipulation, Social control.

Charisma Magic
Charm a person, making them agree with whatever you say.
Project a convincing illusion.
Terrify and enemy, causing them to leave the zone you are in.
Know for certain if someone is lying or not in response to one question.

Enterprise - Offensive Magic

Leadership, Dexterity, Team play, Offense.

Enterprise Magic
Grant yourself or a teammate an additional attack.
Single out an enemy's weak point to add +3 to your next attack roll.
Interrupt an enemy spellcast.
Take a free action when it is not your turn.

Intellect - Defense Magic

Strategy, Scouting, Learning, Defense.

Intellect
Scry on a particular person, object or place for a short duration of time to gather information.
Become invisible for a short period of time.
Gain information on an enemy, revealing one of their stats.
Change the direction of gravity for you or someone else.

Imagination - Support Magic

Abstraction, Amplification, Creation, Buffs and Healing,

Imagination
Create motes of light to illuminate a room.
Give a player another Fate point, but also consume one.
Transfer some of your will to another player.
Turn a doorway into a portal, leading to another location in The Dreamscape.

Combat

Characters in combat perform actions in turns. Most characters can only perform one action per turn. This includes moving, Attacking, using a stunt, or using an item.

Characters can also adopt mutations for free on their turns, or directly after receiving damage.

Movement

Battlefields are divided into 'Zones'. Separate areas of the battlefield to divide conflict.

For example, the interior and exterior of a bar are completely separate zones. The upstairs to a bar may also be a different zone. They are relatively large areas and can even take up multiple rooms.

Characters by default can only move one zone per turn and can only attack other characters in the same zone as them.

Turn Order

Players and enemy creatures roll 4 Fate Die with no additional modifier to determine their turn order. (Highest goes first, lowest last)

If a player and enemy creature share the same turn, opposing creatures go first.

GM Notes

1 round of combat lasts about 10 seconds. (10 seconds pass before it is your turn again).

Attacks

Enterprise Attacks are reliable but weak offensive moves. They are the foundation for more complex stunts.

Characters attack by enforcing their intent to harm upon a target and manifesting weapons from their imagination. Dreamers can wield any weapons they want! But the weapon will not be able to attack enemies in separate zones to the dreamer and will not have any additional effects.

Attackers and their targets perform opposing Enterprise checks (Rolling 4 Fate dice + Enterprise modifier).

If the Defender's roll is higher (or matches the attacker's) they take no damage from the attack. If the Attacker's roll is higher, the defender takes damage equal to the difference between the rolls (AKA the 'shift').

Identity Shock

If a character's Will is reduced to 0 points they suffer 'Identity shock', an effect which paralyses them and prevents them from performing any actions.

If a character's Will is restored above 0 by any means they are recomposed and recover from 'Identity Shock'.

In dire circumstances an afflicted character can restore 1 point of will by sacrificing 1 point of sanity, with severe drawbacks. (outlined under 'Losing Sanity')

A character suffering from 'Identity Shock' receives a brief immunity period in which they cannot receive fatal damage as a dizzying and heavy cloud of consciousness bursts out of them and obscures them.

This immunity period ends when the character next has the opportunity to take their turn.

Taking any amount of damage while suffering from 'Identity shock' outside of the immunity period is fatal and permanent. Characters will begin to dissolve into pure Consciousness, which (if not captured with Siphon) will evaporate into The Dormant's mind.

If a dreamer 'dies' in the dreamscape they return to their waking body... Drained of their personality, memories, and lost to apathy. They have lost their identity.

Mutations

[The mutation system is based on FATE Accelerated's consequence system]

In the heat of conflict a Dreamer can suppress some of the damage they have received and restore Will at the cost of their dignity, becoming corrupted by The Dreamscape and developing mutations to replace the damage that was done.

A character can only suffer one Minor, Moderate, and Major mutation at once respectively. This means they can suffer 3 mutations in total.

A character cannot take a Mutation while under the effects of 'Identity shock', they can however sacrifice a sanity point.

Minor (2 Will Points)
Minor mutations recede after 1 cycle (One play session).
Minor mutations restore 2 will points, curing minor cuts and bruises in a Character's form.

Examples of Minor Mutations are available below.

GM Notes

if you are having difficulty coming up with mutations of your own, you can use dice to roll for an existing example

Die	Mutation
[-]	Injuries clot up with teeth, causing pain but at least preventing leaks.
[ ]	Injuries heal over, but leave a stinging scar that glows brightly in shifting colours.
[+]	A minor injury recovers. But beneath the skin you feel snake-like movement…

Mutations

Moderate (4 Will Points)
Moderate mutations usually recede after 1 adventure/quest-line. (Roughly lasting 2-3 cycles.)
Moderate mutations restore 4 will points, curing significant injuries.

GM Notes

if you are having difficulty coming up with mutations of your own, you can use dice to roll for an existing example

Die	Mutation
[-]	A moderate injury heals and sprouts hundreds of pin-prick irises that never break eye-contact.
[ ]	A gash stops leaking consciousness, but a dark fluid pours out in its place. Leave a trace wherever you go.
[+]	The damaged flesh disintegrates entirely, leaving a concave lapse of mass… At least it doesn't leak.

Major (6 Will Points)
Major mutations take extremely long to recover from and have chaotic drawbacks. They usually recede after an entire story arc has concluded, a major quest-line.

Major mutations restore 6 will points, curing severe injuries at a steep cost.

GM Notes

if you are having difficulty coming up with mutations of your own, you can use dice to roll for an existing example

Die	Mutation
[-]	A damaged limb is entirely replaced with one that has a mind of it's own.
[ ]	Flailing tendrils burst out from the surface of your skin and smother your injuries.
[+]	Injuries become ever-shifting and dizzying incomprehensible mass. You're not sure if this is better or not.

Mutations

In extremely dire circumstance a character may be pressured into permanently sacrificing some of their composure, losing a fragment of their identity in order to survive.

A player can sacrifice 1 sanity point when under the effects of 'Identity shock'. This is the only action they can take individually when they have 0 Will.

This restores 1 point of will and removes the effects of 'Identity shock'.

Losing a sanity point also permanently increases imagination by 1 and reduces Enterprise, Intellect, and Charisma by 1 each.

Sanity can never be restored.

OPTIONAL RULE: As the character's mental state deviates from norm, their personality may shift in chaotic ways.

The following behavioral afflictions are examples of such behavior, these can be incorporated as hard changes that entirely replace Aspects of a character's personality, merely as examples of similar behavior, or not utilized at all!

Afflictions

You recognize the dark truth of the dreamscape; that none of it is real and it is all an illusion… Who's to say the waking world isn't just as fake?

You are isolated by the thought that no-one else can prove they are as conscious as you are. You are the only sapient being in the Dreamscape, and this is your own personal hell.

You find yourself maddeningly infatuated with an object or question… but gain no relief from answers.

GLOSSARY

A-Z

The Dormant

The sleeping eldritch being that hosts the Dreamscape.

The Dreamscape

The plane of existence that lies within the Dormant's mind. This includes the entire city of Composure, the swallowing Dark, and anything that lies beyond.

Consciousness

Consciousness is the lifeblood of an identity, held together by Will to form an individual.

Consciousness is represented as a fine white powder. As an individual is damaged and their will is reduced, the cuts or bruises in their form will leak this dust. It lingers in the air for a few seconds before being absorbed into the Dormant.

The Dormant and its kin feed off of human consciousness and without a constant supply of it will not be able to hibernate. Stirring from its sleep and perhaps destroying the waking world.

Cycles

Cycles are the only measure of time in The Dreamscape.

The beginning of every game session marks a new cycle, thus they occur inconsistently and last for unspecified periods of time.

The beginning of a cycle is marked by brief periods of mental vulnerability in The Dormant, where the buildings of composure shift and churn. This is a period where human Logic has elevated control over the Dreamscape, and marks time for citizens to know when they're due to pay their next tax.

Tax

Every three cycles, all citizens are required to pay a consciousness tax. This involves going to a collection booth, where a tax collector will make a small cut somewhere on the body to draw out consciousness. Members of the Forager faction are exempt from paying this tax, and most members of the Ordo Silentium faction pay a heavily reduced rate.

Will

For more information see ‘Combat’.

Analogous with Health Points. Associated with the Colour Red.

Will is the desire and Intent to remain in the dreamscape, it keeps loose consciousness together and forms an identity. Residences of the dreamscape can disturb or interrupt a Dreamers Will by enforcing their own upon it.

Stats (Traits)

For more information see ‘Character creation’.

Enterprise

Enterprise quantifies a characters ability to think quickly. Used primarily in attacks.
Associated with the colour Orange.

Imagination

Imagination quantifies the depth of a characters free mind, their creativity. Used primarily to cast magic.
Associated with the colour Cyan.

Intellect - Green

Intellect determines a characters understanding of the world around them and deductive reasoning. To make sense of the chaos.
Associated with the colour Green.

Charisma - Purple

Intellect determines a characters ability to persuade or control others socially.
Associated with the colour Purple.

Shift (Rolling Dice)

A ‘shift’ determines how successful (or unsuccessful) a roll is in relation to the DC it is trying to match.

For example, if a character is rolling a check to try and beat a DC of 6, but they roll a 4… They have a shift of -2. Likewise, if they roll a 7 they have a shift of +1.

Faction Names

Ordo Silentium

Sentinels

Scholars

Key Locations

For more information see ‘Character creation’.

Enterprise

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Associated with the colour Purple.

Siphon

For more information see ‘Item Catalogue’.

Concentrated void. Siphon is a rare, pure black material found in small ore veins far from composure’s walls; where chaos reigns supreme. Siphon has the ability to absorb Consciousness dust before it dissolves.

Pearls

For more information see ‘Item Catalogue’.

Pearls are one form of refined Siphon. In a neutral state Pearls are jet-black. Pearls are primarily used by hunters to absorb the leaking consciousness of their victims, they can feed off of this consciousness to sustain themselves or use filled pearls for underground trade.

Somnium

For more information see ‘Item Catalogue’.

Somnium growths are the only source of Consciousness other than human minds. Due to the draining effect the Dreamscape has on the Dreamers, a constantly supply of consciousness is required. This is collected by The Forager faction.

Coloured Somnium

For more information see ‘Item Catalogue’.

Coloured Somnium is a variant of Somnium that provides specific boost to mental traits, it can rarely be found growing out of the final resting place of dreamers… and is rumored to share the dominant mental traits of those dreamers.

Tokens

For more information see ‘Item Catalogue’.

Tokens are featureless currency used throughout composure.

Tokens can be obtained through trade, or by offering some consciousness to the sentinels through tax.

Shades

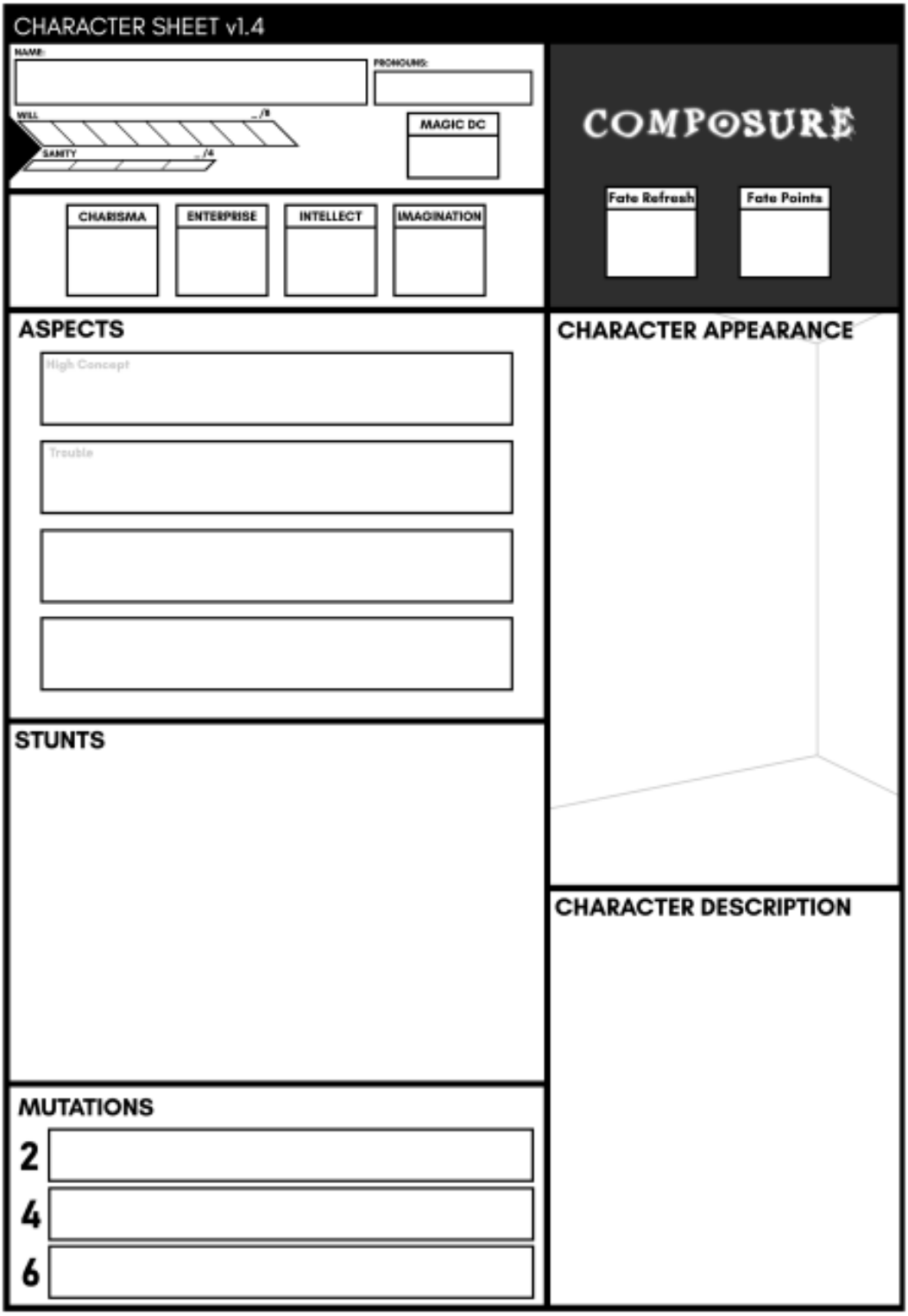
For more information see ‘Beastiary’.

Deformed, shadowy figures that inhabit outer Composure. Hostile, they feed off ones consciousness.

APPENDIX ONE

Character Sheet

A full sheet can be found at the very end of the book.



APPENDIX TWO

Filled Character Sheet

CHARACTER SHEET v1.4

NAME: Laurence

PRONOUNS: He/Him

WILL 8/8

SANITY 4/4

MAGIC DC: 6

CHARISMA	ENTERPRISE	INTELLECT	IMAGINATION
0	-1	+1	+3

COMPOSURE

Fate Refresh	Fate Points
3	3

ASPECTS

High Concept: Lover of the Lovecraftian

Trouble: Argus had better have a good reason for bringing me here

Let's come up with a plan first

Terrible liar

STUNTS

Just Like in My Stories: As a horror writer, I can get +2 to an Intellect roll when attempting to investigate a monster.

You Follow?: Because I ramble and talk fast, I can get +2 to a Charisma roll when I give a long convoluted speech.

Magic: I can use my Imagination to alter a physical attribute of someone or something other than me for one round.

Magic: I can use my Imagination to conjure a shield around an ally, giving them +3 to Enterprise checks when defending against attacks until my next turn.

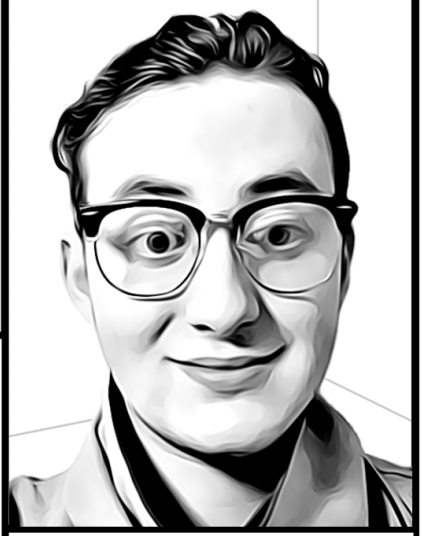
MUTATIONS

2

4

6

CHARACTER APPEARANCE



CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Laurence is a horror writer plagued by nightmares. About a year before the archway to the Dreamscape appeared to him, his dreams were haunted by a monster with hundreds of eyes, which he started calling Argus. He's come to the Dreamscape to find Argus, so he can figure out what it wants and get back to normal life. Laurence is captivated by the city's mystery, and wants to explore it for inspiration for his next book.

Filled Character Sheet

CHARACTER SHEET v1.4

NAME: Kyle

PRONOUNS: He / They

WILL 6 /8

SANITY 3 /4

MAGIC DC: 5

CHARISMA	ENTERPRISE	INTELLECT	IMAGINATION
0	0	+2	+2

COMPOSURE

Fate Refresh	Fate Points
3	2

ASPECTS

High Concept
Ambitious game Designer and Programmer

Trouble
Smartass meets Dumbass

Does a flip, instantly hospitalized

SANITY REDUCTION:
Infatuated with hexagons

STUNTS

STUNT: My history with computers grants me a +2 to Intellect checks that involve technology.
STUNT: My creative application of Logic allows me to use my Intellect modifier for Enterprise checks
MAGIC STUNT: [Intellect] Forsee an enemy attack. Ensuring I don't get hit next turn... If I'm even targetted at all.
MAGIC STUNT: [Imagination] Teleport to any zone on the battlefield.

MUTATIONS

2
4 Clawed hand
6

CHARACTER APPEARANCE

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Kyle is an ambitious creative searching the dreamscape for Inspiration! With lockdown in full swing he finds himself demotivated and is looking to spark his creative interests once again!

APPENDIX THREE

Magic Consequences Examples

Magic Consequences are largely unpredictable, and as such should be up to the interpretation of the DM in the moment. However, tables of example consequences are listed as examples.

Charisma Magic	Consequence (Failed Check)
Terrify an enemy, causing them to leave the zone you are in.	Become terrified of the target as well, unable to approach it.
Know for certain if someone is lying or not in response to one question.	Tell only truthful statements for the remainder of the cycle.

Enterprise Magic	Consequence (Failed Check)
Grant yourself or a teammate an additional attack.	Become terrified of the target as well, unable to approach it.
Take a free action when it is not your turn.	Tell only truthful statements for the remainder of the cycle.

Intellect Magic	Consequence (Failed Check)
Scry on a particular person, object or place for a short duration of time to gather information.	The trance lasts much longer than intended... Or the person you are scrying becomes aware you are watching them.
Change the direction of gravity for you or someone else.	Gravity changes for everyone.

Imagination Magic	Consequence (Failed Check)
Create motes of light to illuminate a room.	The lights are blindingly bright.
Turn a doorway into a portal, leading to another location in The	It's an uncomfortable ride, take significant damage.

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Kyle Ford

Heya! I'm Kyle, System and Game designer.

When we first formed our group I found it a hilarious stroke of luck that the members were looking to create a TTRPG set in a dreamscape... When that was a scrapped project I had explored just a couple years earlier! Even more fortunately... Everyone in the group had such a diverse set of skills. It never felt like anyone was tripping over each other's feet. The group dynamic was satisfying and the work flow was consistent. Everyone carried their weight and it was all around an awesome experience!

The first third of development was rather confused... A Dream world is a difficult one to pin hard rules too, and we considered the idea that the entire world was merely a suggestion. Although it took quite a while we eventually decided that Composure - A city founded on order - would function similarly to the real world and a real city. Somnium could be interpreted as food... There was currency, and tax and much more. This grounded the concept quite a bit and made faction development much, much smoother.

The further one goes from Composure the more susceptible they are to the chaos of the Dreamscape and it's denizens, but the less restricted they are by order.

It felt much easier to establish character motives and conflicts once we had locations, monsters and items. It was very satisfying filling in the gaps once we had the fundamentals of the world in place, much smoother too.

It was admittedly quite turbulent in the last couple weeks as crunch time kicked in, I had to get a COVID shot and several other team members were sick or injured for other reasons. Laurence in particular spent a lot of time writing paragraph after paragraph of lore, character bios and world history towards the end which was greatly appreciated. Laurence was a significant contributor to the project and it would not be nearly as fleshed out without him. Ultimately despite those speedbumps I am very satisfied with the end-product and proud of everyone involved!

When designing the systems for Composure I aimed to target two key concepts that felt integral to the project.

1.) As a dream world the personality and mindset of a player is a key manipulator.
2.) This realm is not meant for humankind, and will gradually corrupt it's residences.

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Kyle Ford

Coming up with interesting game mechanics that fit the context of the narrative was enjoyable and I feel very satisfied with the results.

To satisfy the first rule player stats were replaced with exclusively mental stats, real world physique has no weight in a dream world. To drive this point home Laurence had the idea to restrict magic abilities to a characters dominant stat like different schools of magic. This was a fantastic idea! The concept of magic stunts was born. Now players can manipulate the dreamscape using the strongest aspects of their personality, which provides character and roleplay focussed gameplay opportunities!

To satisfy the second rule, we introduced the sanity and mutations systems.

We considered the possibility of sanity reductions occurring when exposed to particularly intense or disturbing situations like another TTRPG; Call of Cthulhu. However… To have aspects of a characters personality damaged by something out of their control can be disruptive and annoying for players, perhaps even frustrating. To fix this, we designed a system where the player must be the one to pull the trigger.

The player has agency over the decision to sacrifice a point of sanity and lose their 'composure' permanently. Even though the player is still pressured into making that decision the final call is theirs, the blood is in their hands. This way the player is in much closer proximity to the consequences of their actions, and it becomes more difficult to blame the DM for going all out with a horror encounter.

The introduction of Will and Mutations was an attempt at simplifying FATE's consequences system. Allowing the dreamscape to fill the cuts and gashes in your body with clotting mutations makes as much sense in lore as it does mechanically. Once again players get the option to sacrifice their integrity to save themselves. The Mutations system allows the DM to corrupt the PCs and opens up a lot of opportunity for flavour.

To me the mutations system has more mechanic harmony than fates consequence system... 'deciding' to take a horrible gash instead of a lethal blow doesn't make a lot of narrative sense...

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Kyle Ford

Working on Composure was an educational experience, I feel a lot of game design and narrative knowledge was learned throughout Composure's development.

I would usually consider myself confident with UI design, particularly when creating flashy interfaces. The original draft of the character sheet included a satisfying and aesthetically pleasing way of representing players stats but unfortunately this was at the detriment of practical use and took up more space than was necessary. Learning a balance between function and form and being given the opportunity to learn better communication skills was very valuable.

Additionally when designing story events or the like I always just went with broad strokes. But with all the writers on the team I came to learn beauty is in the details and subtle world building is very valuable.

The project wasn't without it's hardships though.

Over the course of the Adventure books development I found I kept assuming players were familiar with TTRPG mechanics, and while most players would be... The setting book should still be accessible as possible. It was surprisingly very difficult to get across what I was trying to convey at times, and I had to rely on other group members for readability changes. Particularly during the first playtest regarding the Magic system... Players found it unusable as it was poorly defined and far too broad, but I felt it was very clear. From then on I gathered repeated input from other group members to ensure everything was properly communicated, their assistance was invaluable.

Moving forward I've considered a direction to take the Individual Adventure Book.

For my individual adventure book I'm considering exploring the outer regions of composure... Out in the dark. While there is plenty of content in the walls of the city, I would like to use characters and locations home to the swallowing dark... And explore the darkest sides of The Dreamscape.

Overall, I found the entire experience incredibly worthwhile! I'm truly proud of what everyone has collaborated to create and I look forward to working with them in the future!

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Kyle Ford

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APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Kyle Ford

FINAL CONTRIBUTIONS LIST:

Glossary, Hyper-links

All systems and game design, with assistance from Laurence

Character sheet design & Character creation

Item Catalogue

Draft document structure

General management

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APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Selena Oung

Composure, composure, composure.

Despite the name I can guarantee you I was not keeping my composure during the creation of this game.

The world of TTRPGs to me is one completely unknown, something that I wished to explore but never had the chance to. I have played games that have featured systems loosely based around things like 'Dungeons and Dragons' but never have I personally played a campaign or read too deeply into it. So… to be thrown in the deep end and to take part in the creation of one was nonetheless mind boggling to me. I felt overwhelmed by the system and having to be surrounded by others who are quite obviously more experienced with the genre than I, it was a relatively daunting process.

The original pitch I had in mind involved the exploration of people's minds and, in a way, literally fighting their inner demons. I found horror would have been a genre that complimented the style of play I wanted to achieve most and hoped to find others that - although not completely have the same concept perse - would like to explore this setting.

I was fortunate enough to have pitch that resonated enough with five others whom I have become ever thankful for during the game's creation, where we slotted together with minimal clashes to create what you see in this gamebook now. Despite the deviation from my original pitch, I could still see parts of it which overlapped into Composure in terms of the art direction and minor details. The world of Composure itself is complex and many factors got tangled up in one another when fleshing out the lore or the motivations behind its existence, with a push and pull with what can or cannot be or what one can or cannot do.

Admittedly I found myself relying on my group members for most of the world building, with only minor contributions seeing I personally was not confident in my own ideas or concepts, especially since my knowledge about it was minimal. Due to this I found myself looking towards more so to the art direction and overall design of Composure itself, being more comfortable with voicing my ideas to the group about them either through our discord or tutorials. It was from here on I felt like I could be apart of building the foundation that Composure lays on.

The other two artists involved with Composure - Eden and Louis - were both amazing in their works, Eden especially being a motivating factor in creating the contrasting styles between outer and inner Composure. I do not think I could have been open about my skillset for the group without her! Though we did however have quite the carry on the team, being Laurence.

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Selena Oung

FINAL CONTRIBUTIONS LIST:

Style Guide and Moodboard

Monster Design and Art

Item Art (Black Pearl and Tokens)

Gamebook Formatting

Without him I would not have been in this group to begin with. He showed amazing dedication to Composure itself as a huge driving force in its formation, manifesting the world through his writing alone.

The design process itself was a frustrating one for me. I felt like I was fighting more so with myself, unable to choose a direction to move and forcing myself in a creative block as I felt barred by my own skill ceiling with art. The creation and design of the Shades themselves was very back and forth with many scrapped drafts and an initial design that I was not completely fond of. I wished to create something disturbing but at the same time nothing over the top or exaggerated. I wanted the Shades have a base form which could be altered and changed, whilst also being combatively feared. This issue was alleviated by discussing with the group, seeing what they would want and melding our ideas into something that at last fit what we as a group envisioned. With this momentum that design of the void hounds was also introduced and used to fill outer Composure. The gamebook itself was fun to experiment with, especially with UI elements and creation of legible layouts.

Overall, I found myself gradually warming up to the group and immersing myself into the world, I understood from an outsider's perspective our concept is abstract and there were many things that could fall through or seem too vague, so it was nice to be able to contribute to helping a player ease into the world through the art and gamebook. As I mentioned before I am very grateful to be in this group, everyone carried their own weight despite drawbacks and personal commitments, and we managed to push ourselves to create Composure!

The adventure book will be my first venture out, doing something alone with the genre so I hope to use the world of Composure and new knowledge of the system to my advantage. I personally love the concept of raids, epic battles with something unknown - a concept based around unifying, strengthening the bond of those you adventure with though with a consequence or one's demise. So it will probably go along these lines.

It is another cycle as usual in Composure, Wonderland is packed to the brim with patrons as they bustle about, drinks in hand and the heady presence of somnium thick in the air. The sudden jolt of the door has you and your party whipping their heads to the culprit, a heavily mutated Nyven looms in the doorway as he clutches what appears to be a severed hunters wing.
Glancing back, you almost think Cheshire's grin grows even wider.
It appears that Shades and the void hounds have been attacking eachother, unusual variations of them appearing in outer Composure. So... it is up to you to investigate.

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Casey Woods

I'm Casey, worldbuilder and location writer.

My original game world pitches were sci-fi themed, but I chose to join a group that had something else in mind. I'd met a few of my group members in the first workshop, and we'd agreed to form a group together. This put me in the exciting situation of working on a world set in a dreamscape, a concept I'd never explored before. We had 6 group members for this task instead of the recommended 5, but I think we worked well nonetheless with the extra person allowing us to share the workload better, particularly when some group members were unavailable due to illness.

At first, it took me some time of hearing out the rest of the group's suggestions to be confident enough in my understanding of the setting to put forward my ideas for the world, but once we reached that point the ideas came quickly. We solidified the idea of a city built in a vast void, that was accommodating to humans, but had strange or unfamiliar elements. Originally, the player characters were going to be 'lucid dreamers' who had more power in this world than normal dreamers, but as the mechanics were refined this distinction became less significant and we ultimately scrapped the idea.

We determined early on that the dreamscape was to be contained within the sleeping mind of an immortal being, The Dormant. This helped in the creation of factions and the establishment of people's motivations in this world, be them players or NPCs.

At the beginning of this task, I had no experience with the Fate system, and very little experience with TTRPGs in general, so I didn't have much involvement in the meta mechanics of the game world, and mostly stuck to adding story details and helping iron out in-universe mechanics. My main focuses became the factions and their relationships, key locations in the city, and the intricacies of day-to-day life for Dreamers.

I really leaned towards the idea that the city's appearance was related to people's perception of it. People who live good lives in the dreamscape would find themselves in a neat and well build district, but people with dark lives and experiences would wind up in bad neighbourhoods. These perceptions would be stronger the more people were around, so on the outskirts of the city, things would make less sense. An empty building in a remote area would change depending on who was visiting it.

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Casey Woods

This would also allow devout cultists to influence their surroundings by sheer willpower and belief, a concept I applied to allow their base of operations to be any empty building they choose.

When we did the microscope worldbuilding activity, we decided that there was a great war, called The Stirring, inside the dreamscape that almost woke The Dormant, an event that was the catalyst of the formations of the factions as we know them. This gave me the opportunity to create some variation in the faction histories. If the dreamscape had always been the same, the factions would have all been founded around the same time way back in the beginning. Instead, there were only regular citizens to begin with, some of which gave themselves the roles of scholars or foragers, and a handful of cultists that grew in number over time. From there, I was able to write how the factions changed after the Stirring and build more tension with the cultists and the hunters.

I was a little concerned at the beginning of this task for a few reasons. While I've always enjoyed coming up with creative ideas and stories, I'm a programmer and a mathematician at heart, so writing really isn't my forte. I also tend to do my best assignment work when the due date is near. This is not a great combination with a group assignment, especially when the group is keen to do work. In a worst-case scenario, the work that I was planning on doing later could be done by a group member before I get the chance, making it hard for me to do my fair share of the work. I was particularly worries that is could be an issue in a 6-person group. Fortunately, he division of labour was clear enough in the end that everyone had opportunities to claim areas of the book to complete. I still feel like I could have done more for the final submission, as I wrote a relatively small section in the book. I think a lot of what I brought to this task was in the stages before finalisation, when we were just working with ideas, something that isn't easily communicated in a written format or clearly distinguished as one person's work. I hope the team is still able to appreciate what I did for this task.

Overall, this was a good learning experience for me. I took this unit as an elective, with all my other units being math or programming based, because I wanted to work on my story design skills. So far, I haven't had to do too much writing, but we'll see how the next task goes.

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Individual Reflections

Casey Woods

FINAL CONTRIBUTIONS LIST:

Early worldbuilding ideas

Final faction histories

Final faction locations

For my adventure book, I was initially planning on doing something with the scholars, my personal favourite faction, but some other group members were also planning to do stories with the scholars that were already much more fleshed out than my ideas. I instead decided on a story focused on the Sentinels and Cultists, with underlying themes of mistrust, deceit, and corruption.

The players are dropped into the world and immediate witness Sentinels beating down a Dreamer. Before the players get themselves into trouble with the sentinels, Cheshire ushers them into Wonderland and explains that what they saw was perfectly normal. The players will see an unusual number of similar situations as they explore Composure. If they look into it further, they will learn that a new Sentinel commander has been promoted and is taking swift and harsh actions towards tax evaders. Even Cheshire will be forced underground. Further investigation will either reveal that the Sentinels are overreaching with their power and need to be stopped, OR the players will discover that the new commander is in fact a cultist, initiating the beginning of a plot centuries in the making

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Louis Nasplezes

Coming up with interesting game mechanics that fit the context of the narrative was enjoyable and I feel very satisfied with the results.

To satisfy the first rule player stats were replaced with exclusively mental stats, real world physique has no weight in a dream world. To drive this point home Laurence had the idea to restrict magic abilities to a characters dominant stat like different schools of magic. This was a fantastic idea! The concept of magic stunts was born. Now players can manipulate the dreamscape using the strongest aspects of their personality, which provides character and roleplay focussed gameplay opportunities!

To satisfy the second rule, we introduced the sanity and mutations systems.

We considered the possibility of sanity reductions occurring when exposed to particularly intense or disturbing situations like another TTRPG; Call of Cthulhu. However... To have aspects of a characters personality damaged by something out of their control can be disruptive and annoying for players, perhaps even frustrating. To fix this, we designed a system where the player must be the one to pull the trigger.

The player has agency over the decision to sacrifice a point of sanity and lose their 'composure' permanently. Even though the player is still pressured into making that decision the final call is theirs, the blood is in their hands. This way the player is in much closer proximity to the consequences of their actions, and it becomes more difficult to blame the DM for going all out with a horror encounter.

The introduction of Will and Mutations was an attempt at simplifying FATE's consequences system. Allowing the dreamscape to fill the cuts and gashes in your body with clotting mutations makes as much sense in lore as it does mechanically. Once again players get the option to sacrifice their integrity to save themselves. The Mutations system allows the DM to corrupt the PCs and opens up a lot of opportunity for flavour.

To me the mutations system has more mechanic harmony than fates consequence system... 'deciding' to take a horrible gash instead of a lethal blow doesn't make a lot of narrative sense...

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Individual Reflections

Louis Nasplezes

Hi I'm Louis, and my role is all about art, art and a bit more art.

Our group formation started by ideating with a makeshift group we, Eden, Kyle, Casey and I, had started and we noticed that many of our ideas were similiar and thus our group started early, although not formally, from here. Our group grew as Lawrence and Selena joined us afterwards, having caught wind of our idea and noticing the similarity to what they wanted to explore, getting these two on our team was huge, and would enable us to focus and explore many ideas we had never considered fully much more. Although we had already talked vaguely about the concept, we were all excited to get truly started, and we had no idea how much our idea would change.

From our first meeting we all seemed to immediately notice our own strengths and weaknesses, and from here we quickly established what area's we wanted to focus on, although this wasn't entirely formalised until a little later. As I was new to table-tops in general, I didn't want to tackle any technical elements of the game system without learning a lot first, and luckily Kyle and Laurence seemed to have a good idea of how to adapt the engine to our abstract vision. Eden, Selena and I all specialised on art, and as thus we divided up the work between us, Eden had a lot of character designs and so she took that aspect of the art direction, while Selena took the shades and monsters, I volunteered for the environmental art, which while not my speciality was a field, I enjoyed drawing in. Casey and Laurence had a great number of ideas to incorporate, and as thus become the two big writers of our group.

The actual working process through the weeks were fun and our idea was constantly changing and being refined for the better, although I do admit to worrying it was changing a little too much, it was ultimately for the better as our newer ideas had much more ground and playability as a tabletop game than our earlier concepts. This however did mean we didn't get into really finalising many of our designs, art and writing until quite late, but luckily as we would find out, our team was excellent at working quickly under pressure.

Our writers Laurence and Casey did an excellent job at contextualising and focusing a lot of information which was quite loose and messy in our document for the final version, and really allowed for a lot of our ideas to be clearly communicated in a way that not only best captured the world we had created, but also fit into explain a table-top game accurately and clearly.

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Individual Reflections

Louis Nasplezes

hanks to these two our environments and character had a proper history and culture that fit into the broader themes of the world, which would allow for many different storytelling avenues. Laurence especially had some excellent ideas on how the dynamics of our world would work, and his input often directed the initial ideas and concepts as we would talk them over week by week.

Kyle handled both the management of our production and the game mechanics, and without him we absolutely would not have a playable game. His knowledge of the fate system helped clear a lot of confusion and misunderstandings we had throughout the whole project and helped us ensure our world never contradicted what would fit into a fate-based table-top game. His expertise allowed us to modify fate to our own needs, which allowed for a level of cohesion I initially, admittedly as a beginner to table-tops, thought would be impossible, making a truly fun experience.

On the artist side of things, Eden's character designs were huge in directing how we approached the style and design of the overall aesthetics of the world, and although she was out of commission in the last week due to injury, her work was profound enough that it almost didn't matter. Selena doubled in being an extremely important team member as she designed the UI and Design for our final book, compiling all our information in a visually interesting and striking way that lent itself to our envisioned overall design. This all alongside designing some awesome shade (monster) designs. As for me, I found designing the environments a much bigger beast than I had imagined and did struggle to finish all the work on time, that being said I dedicated a huge amount of time into making sure all my designs fit into the world and expressed not only our world but perhaps how our game could be played and imagined by GM's and Players alike. I found the animals a fun little activity that was much easier, but still had a measured impact in making our world feel more in depth and interesting.

The entire process was one of great difficulty and quite stressful at times as we found we all had to go outside our expected roles at time to fulfill little things that hadn't been completed yet, but our team was very understanding and passionate about the project, ensuring that everyone was always committed to producing their best work.

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Individual Reflections

Louis Nasplezes

FINAL CONTRIBUTIONS LIST:

Environmental Design and Art

Animal Design and Art

Animal Bios and Base Mechanics

Co-ordinating Aesthetics and Overall Designs with Eden

Personally, I learned a great deal about not only table-tops but how to create universes and worlds that feel like they have life and depth, a vital skill for any storyteller. Adding in the interactivity of a tabletop was something I was less versed in and struggled with at times, but thanks to my team and some research, I was happy with the environments and locations created and could definitely see potential players playing around and enjoying these spaces. The entire process was extremely informative and enjoyable overall. My ability to work diligently and focus creative ideas in order to create complex pieces was my biggest strength to this project, while my lack of knowledge and hesitation to start final designs was certainly my weakness.

Ideas and Scenarios for A2

A man snatched walking home along the Scholar Tunnels, A woman missing from the Inner Sanctum leaving no trace behind, A hunter child disappeared into the shadows but not in the usual way this time.
Something strange is happening in composure, strange even compared to the usual strangeness of the city. Everything culminates one night, as players are attacked by Shades…in the heart of Ordo Silentium.

Something dark is afoot in Composure, and shades appearing mysteriously in the city is just part of it, to find out what will be a journey into the darkest secrets of each faction, to find those guilty, every secret must be read aloud, every rock turned over, every patch of darkness explored.
This is a story about espionage, secrets, conspiracy and most of all…betrayal. From the smallest house in the outer reaches to the uppermost floor in the Citadel of Silence, it is up to the players to find out just how far this conspiracy extends.

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Individual Reflections

Laurence

I'm Laurence, worldbuilder, lead writer, and resident eldritch fanatic.

I've played, GMed, and listened to hundreds of hours of TTRPG content. Despite that, I never realised that it was a market I could get in on, and I'm incredibly grateful for this subject handing me my training wheels. Most of the TTRPG stuff I've engaged with is typical high fantasy, so I wanted to step out of my comfort zone here and work with horror as a genre. For the first week of pitches, I was alone in the horror column, with my pitch about Men in Black for Lovecraftian Old Ones. I wanted to explore delving into mindscapes, fighting horrors and madness while solving mysteries. At the end of that first week, I messaged one of the fantasy authors, ready to drop my pitch and jump ship, but the next day I got a message from Selena asking to collaborate. We talked about the similarities in our settings, Selena's pitch also themed around exploring realities inside the minds of others, and agreed to work together. Then, as luck would have it, Eden posted her pitches a few days later, including a dreamcore horror setting, and she had already gathered the rest of our group of six around the idea.

We six strangers immediately began brainstorming, the entire team enthusiastically contributing fresh ideas. Over the course of the cycle, our group synergised incredibly well, building off of each others' ideas and covering a wide range of skillsets. Those of us who were versed in TTRPG content helped to bring the others up to speed, and we were an unstoppable idea machine. Each week, we came up with fresh suggestions for the world, adding bits and pieces of detail and linking them back to our overarching themes. The creative juices flowed like wine.

Until we got to the actual book, that is. By the time we began compilation, our notes were all over the place. While there was some structure and assortment by week in our google doc, many of our notes were mental, or scattered between our personal and team discord channels. While the bounce-back from that went well, and we were able to pull everything together in the end, I think our biggest problem in development was oversaturation of ideas. It was difficult, with the setting being this malleable, to stop coming up with new world elements and flesh out the old ones more distinctly.

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Laurence

Still, everyone slotted into their assigned roles nicely. Our three artists were able to flaunt their different styles, each taking wildly different source material and breathing life into them. Eden's character designs are beautiful, capturing the personality and ability of their subjects without being hyperdetailed. Selena's Shades are terrifying, perfectly carrying the essence of the city outskirts, and Louis' environments show off the personality of their inhabitants in a very simple, legible way.

Kyle tackled the technical job of reimagining the FATE system in an unusual context and genre, and the resulting mechanics we have are tight enough to play a cohesive game with, but leave ample room for player creativity. Casey handled a lot of the faction writing, as well as the back-end job of turning our mad scribble of a google doc into a coherent game book. The original document link is still in the team journal, take a look - you'll see it's not for the faint of heart.

Finally, I took on the brunt of the writing. A lot of it was done uncomfortably close to the deadline, but with the ideas all jotted down it was only a matter of collating them and fitting them into my writing style. I took this opportunity to flex my dramatic narration muscles a bit, and while I'm not sure if all the world history and details came out 100% clear in the end, it should at least make for an interesting read. Composure is an atypical spin on psychological horror, and I can only hope I managed to do it justice.

In playtesting, I GMed our testers through character creation, and we found that our biggest issue was lack of context. There's so much lore behind the setting of Composure, but due to the abstract nature of the setting it was hard to explain to people without prior knowledge. So, for the week afterward, I focused on laying down all the world history, and creating a serviceable player introduction. The players need enough context to get excited for what they're about to get into, but not enough to ruin the intrigue. So, I decided the best way to get them invested would be to give them everything their characters would know in the waking world, but leave the details of the city as rumours and mysteries.

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Laurence

FINAL CONTRIBUTIONS LIST:

Worldbuilding/lore development

Exposition/History writing

Faction writing

Mechanics/systems contribution (Mostly Kyle, but I helped a bit)-

Mechanics/systems contribution (Mostly Kyle, but I helped a bit)

The consequences I talked about for the Dreamers who left are seen in plenty of Lovecraftian media, so if nothing else they should rope in fans of the genre and style.

Which leads me to my idea for assignment 2. Like the other group members, I figured that the best way to create an adventure with multiple directions was to avoid tethering the players to a specific faction, instead catching them in the crossfire between members of different factions and letting them choose their path. With that, here's my pitch for my assignment 2 adventure.

The players are in Wonderland, enjoying some down-time, when they are approached by a pair of over-eager scholars. The scholars are enlisting help to catch some Shades to be studied, and want the players to join them. Whatever the players' reactions to that are, they are approached shortly after by Nyven and a seemingly unmutated friend of his, who pulls up their sleeve to reveal a string of Hunters' pearls. This concealed Hunter was also approached by the Scholars, who told them too much information about the expedition. Nyven invites the players back to the Tooth and Nail, where he tells them about the Hunter faction and offers to bring them in on one condition; the players must kill or capture the Scholar party and collect their Consciousness.

This allows the players to pick a side, either orchestrating an assassination plot or preventing one and capturing Shades. The setting of the outer ring allows for other complications, like interfering Foragers or Shades being stronger than expected. Overall, the adventure would be concise, allow for a lot of player planning, and set up the players with a factional alliance for future sessions.

To round out my reflection, I had a lot of fun with this project. I got to apply my skills, as did the rest of the team, and I can't praise them enough for all the hard work they put into this project. We're planning to re-visit Composure in the holidays, rounding it out to send in for publishing on the FATE website, and we'll hopefully be working together again on a second original setting book. Any and all marker feedback will be gratefully taken into account.

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Eden Takenaka

Hello adventurers, my name is Eden Takenaka professional character designer and aspiring concept artist.

From writing a collection of possible world pitches, I was delighted that my dreamscape pitch had caught the attention of some wonderfully unique and interesting individuals, as I was always worried that I'd have to settle for a stereotypical medieval fantasy world pitch for the assignment (which is personally not my favourite genre) I was pleasantly surprised by the excitement of the group and immediately many new ideas and directions were brought to the table. Reflecting on the group process of the development team, I am grateful that we formed a team of inspired and talented students. Planning was always exciting and dynamic as each member brought new ideas to the table each week. Together the lore and history of our world was built and followed by our wonderful mechanics writers to apply the lore to FATE.

I believe production remained quite strong throughout the entirety of development. The most gratifying moments of success lied when a concept was perfectly executed and excited the team to keep going. However, whenever I responded to Laurence's (character bio writer) character descriptions with physical art that which suited exactly the vision he held for that concept, I was met with staggering positive responses from him and the rest of the team. And personally, I would consider those acts the highest successes for myself personally. Working with such a wonderfully detailed concept allowed each played to bring something of their own personal interest to the table and most often could be fitted seamlessly into the world book. The team's weak points, if any mostly lied in either absence from class of weekly meeting in which they then would be confused and uneducated of any concept changes, occasionally this meant that members were writing or rewriting aspects of the world already finalized by another team member. Albeit this, issues were always resolved, and the development team soared.

I have always been inspired by game design, but even more so by narrative design. I because of an infatuation with world building, I felt as if I was aware of every little detail and description and the things needed to craft a wonderful world. However, even in being confident, I was completely floored by just how many components and attributes it takes to make a thriving world feel less like a fantasy and more like a living and breathing world. I had never even considered things like agriculture, social hierarchy, politics and especially physics.

APPENDIX FOUR

Individual Reflections

Eden Takenaka

So as development continued, I found more and more excited about every nook and cranny of detail that each member designed and conceptualised. Small pearls, giant sleeping gods at the centre of the world, and every logical way a city built around it would function just as a normal city were just a few of the things I was inspired by. Getting to concept and design aspects of the world, like the factions, their goals and ambitions, the sleeping dreamer, agriculture for Composure and even small things such as the time cycles and sky colour, allowed me to design further, deeper and at a level of detail I'd never have considered, and I am very grateful to the opportunity.

FINAL CONTRIBUTIONS LIST:

Character design

Faction design

Original pitch conceptualizations

Reflecting upon my own practise as a designer, I feel I contributed many strong idealisations to the soul foundations that built Composure. I'm extremely satisfied with the concept art, concept sketches and general output which applied my practises as an artist. The art I provided for Composure, I feel captures the aesthetic and themes targeted by the rest of the development team. I was shocked and so completely flattered by the teams positive response to the design and I do look forward to character design again hopefully in the future.

I am very excited for the world of Composure and have already considered many scenarios that could play out in fantastic stories. One such being, the party encountering a member of the faction of knowledge and learning about their undercover work into discovering how Composure's unique agriculture could somehow be fed to the great dreamer, to then replace the forceful taxation of will and individuality. the follow through of this scenario would be met with backlash from the governing parties and outrage from several others. Another such scenario could include the party for the wandering back into the unusual bar of the renowned Cheshire, only to see that the man of many words is gone. Smaller scenarios include, imagining players scrying the rolling wastes outside the city on a gathering caravan accompanied by the faction of foragers, finding out that the government has placed and hunters mark upon them and then having to run or confront the assassins of the hunter's guild.

Finally, I'd like to thank each team member, Selena, Luis, Laurence, Casey and Kyle for their wonderful support and understanding of my absence while I was in hospital. I did not expect such positive responses and am very grateful to them.

APPENDIX FIVE

PM Document

https://connectqutedu-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/r/personal/n10777903_qut_edu_au/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx?e=OsBNql&share=EcSq1yp0aC1Pr-VrPInjQjQBc5DLZcca-5Ho703Q1h8fhw

Task	Week	Domain	Task category	Task description	Flag / Triage	Assigned to	Status	Time estimate	Actual time spent	Notes
1	Ongoing	Concept	Overall	Refining high concept	Red	All	Complete			Core to submission
2	Ongoing	Influences	Overall	Collecting notes from team members	Red	All, the journal google Doc	Complete			Core to submission
3	6	Systems	Fate tweak	Adapt FAE for world	Red	Kyle	Complete			Core to submission
4	6	Design	Fate tweak	Adapt FAE character sheet	Red	Kyle	Complete			Core to submission
5	4	Design	Logo & UI design	Mood board, Style guide	Red	Selena	Complete			Core to submission
6	7	Art	Architecture	Faction turf and architecture design	Red	Louis	Complete			GM material
7	7	World	Mutation system	Explanation and aspects for character sheets	Red	Kyle	Complete			Core to submission
8	7	World	History	Founding of Ordo-Silentium	Red	All	Complete			Core to submission
9	8	World	Characters	Faction character examples, Key characters	Red	Laurence, contributions from all	Complete			Core to submission
10	8	Art	NPCs	Main NPC art for character sheets	Red	Eden	Complete			Core to submission
11	8	Art	Creatures	General beastiary	Yellow	Selena, Eden, Louis	Complete			Good for GM and players
12	8	Design	Book layout	Layout and formatting for book	Red	Selena, Casey, Contributions from all	Complete			Good for GM and players
13	8	World	Introduction	Introduction to factions & world	Red	Laurence, Contributions from Casey and Louis	Complete			Core to submission
14	8	Design	Character creation	Character sheet & creation	Red	Kyle	Complete			Core to submission
15	8	Systems	Items catalogue	Catalogue of items available in game world	Yellow	Kyle, Contributions from all	Complete			Core to submission
16	8	World	History, Faction inte	Faction history, Inter-relations, and additional	Red	Laurance, Contributiosn from Casey	Complete			Core to submission
17	8	World	Environment	Environments/places of interest (White Space,	Yellow	Casey	Complete			Core to submission
18	8	Design	GM notes	GM notes, glossary, etc.	Red	Kyle, Contributions from all	Complete			Core to submission
19	Final week	Design	Adventure Funnel	For final submission	Red	Whoeover has a spare adventure idea	Complete			Core to submission

APPENDIX SIX

Journal Summary

BLACKBOARD
https://blackboard.qut.edu.au/webapps/blogs-journals/execute/viewBlog?course_id=_157834_1&blog_id=_275739_1&group_id=_520485_1&gml_reload=no&blog_course_user_id=&index_

GOOGLE DOC
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hg4YBQXFRT6YhHmUGhur4V3hbexBnkDYPDq6uNARK9A/edit#

Summary

Group Members / Roles:
story designer - Laurence S

An artist (or someone to coordinate aesthetics) - Louis N, Eden Takenaka

A producer/editor - Kyle F

A gameplay designer - Kyle F

Research, character design, book design - Eden Takenaka, Selena, Casey

UI / UX design - Selena O, Kyle F

Writing and editing - Laurence S, Louis N

Weekly Scrums:

Weeks 2/3

Assigned roles as above

Created journal document, created personal discord

Created basic high concept,

Week 4

Completed timeline activity and proposed history events and foundation of Ordo Silentium Faction. History was considered complete to the extent we wanted.

Extremely early Draft of mechanics, discussed player agency and situations we wanted to create with mechanics. Sanity system proposed.

Refined mood board and aesthetics.

Noted down relevant terminology and ideas, this later became the Glossary.

Journal Summary

Summary

Week 5:

Defined terminology for game stats and effects, as well as world objects and creatures

Created Somnium plants, which introduced the possibility of an entire agricultural industry and economy, this was needed.

Contextualized factions and their turf, as well as their interactions with the world.

Character art and design drawn by Eden, Somnium plants also drawn.

Workshopped logo.

Week 6:

Next iteration of mechanics and stats

Final draft of Character sheet ready for playtesting.

Additional concept art for faction leaders and other characters (Cheshire, Nyven, etc) by Eden

Bios for Faction officials, motives history etc, as well as NPCs

Environmental sketches and animal sketches by Louis

Converting document information from the journal into the final book document.

Week 7:

Animal sketches digitized

Style guide for consistency

Basic magic system included

Mutation system finalized

Introduced DC chart

Wrote up attacks, movement and other basic systems

Made several QoL changes to character sheet

Several shades were drawn by Selena

Attempted playtesting

Journal Summary

Summary

Week 8:

Environment sketches digitized By Louis

Feedback from Playtesters determined Character sheet needed to be changed yet again, this is the final iteration. (Playtesters did not use the cool ass stat diamond)

Removed concept of lucid dreamers, this was an unnecessary "chosen one" gimmick that damaged horror elements of the game.

Magic system entirely overhauled, now 'Magic stunts' are included and are based off of a characters personality traits as a kind of 'magic school'

Rewrote a lot of mechanics to make their narrative significance more clear to players based on playtesting feedback.

Included Licensing for Fate, Fate logo, and fonts.

HUGE haul of writing to finalize world history and aspects of confusion based on Playtesting feedback (such as death). DM introductions and world introductions. All by Laurence.

The book was converted from it's draft format to it's final design by Salena

Created several filled character sheets as examples.

Wrote individual reflections and prepared for final submission!

CREDITS

Licensing

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Team Portraits

Team portraits are generated by Sangled Here (found at https://picrew.me/image_maker/94097)

CHARACTER SHEET v1.4

NAME:

PRONOUNS:

WILL _/8

SANITY _/4

MAGIC DC

COMPOSURE

Fate Refresh

Fate Points

CHARISMA

ENTERPRISE

INTELLECT

IMAGINATION

ASPECTS

High Concept

Trouble

CHARACTER APPEARANCE

STUNTS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

MUTATIONS

2

4

6

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